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THE ROMAN EMPIRE
300-1000 A.D.
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" " 1000 A.D. BOHEMIA
Names in use before the fall of the Roman Empire Septa
" " " in the Middle Ages or modern name Ceuta
Boundary of the Roman Empire 300 A.D.
Roman Roads
With few exceptions only those places mentioned in the text are named on the map.
English Miles
Rome
Tripolis
Mecca

THE MAKING OF WESTERN EUROPE

BEING AN ATTEMPT
TO TRACE THE FORTUNES OF

THE CHILDREN OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

1998

BY C. R. L. FLETCHER
FORMERLY FELLOW OF ALL SOULS AND MAGDALEN COLLEGES, OXFORD

VOL. I.—THE DARK AGES
300-1000 A.D.

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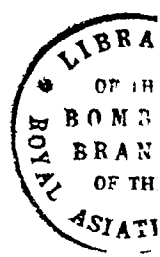

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Mrs Opimian.—"I think, Doctor, you would not maintain any opinion if you had not an authority two thousand years old for it."

The Rev. Dr Opimian.—"Well, my dear, I think most opinions worth maintaining have an authority of about that age." PEACOCK.

PREFACE

THE genesis of the present attempt must be sought in Professor W. P. Ker's fascinating book entitled *The Dark Ages*, the first volume in Professor Saintsbury's series of *Periods of European Literature*. I am not so vain as to imagine that I can illustrate the political side of the period as he has illustrated the literary side; but it was his book that first stimulated in me a sort of thirst to know more about the Dark Ages, and, when once that thirst was created, mere idleness prompted me to try and put on paper, in simple form, such ideas as I had been able to collect.

These ideas are very few. I am continually reminded how little we know, how meagre and untrustworthy are our authorities, how much, to use Mommsen's words, we fall back upon 'the conventionally-received tradition which assumes the name of history . . . a mass of mostly worthless legends, which have usually been put together without discrimination of the true character, either of legend or history.'

I have nothing new to contribute to the elucidation or the testing of such legends. I have read a great many chronicles of the Dark Ages, enjoyed some of them very much, and been excessively bored by others. If I have occasionally been led to quote from them passages which more learned writers have not quoted, I have also rejected a good many that are more or less familiar to English readers. For I think that, as in English history one becomes weary of the sparrow that flew into the lighted hall at night, so in European history

it would not serve any good purpose to repeat the story, humorous as it is, of Rollo's peculiar method of doing homage to King Charles the Simple.

Of secondary, tertiary and modern 'authorities,' I can only claim to have read some of the most widely received and ordinary writers in English, French, German and Italian; for I am unfortunately unacquainted with Magyar and the various Slavonic tongues, in which, we are given to understand, the most truly learned historical works are now written.

This book, then, puts forward no claims except to give the old story of the 'Making of Western Europe' in rather simpler form than usual. It confines itself wholly to Western Europe, because it is concerned only with the fortunes of the 'Children of the Roman Empire'; and even from that family it omits the history of one child, Britain, or England, because the writer has already attempted some illustrations of that history in another book. Thus, should its life be prolonged to a second volume, it will continue to exclude everything east and north of modern Germany, everything east of modern Austria.

One who firmly believes, as I do, in the literal truth of the essential facts of the gospel story, and yet cannot accept any theory of inspiration in the writers of the New Testament, still less of any continuous inspiration of the Church, must necessarily find great difficulties in dealing with Church History. I cannot help seeing how thickly, even from the earliest times, the Church overlaid the truth with masses of legend and superstition; and yet I feel both that her success in converting the world was largely owing to her use of superstition, and also that her conversion of the world was the greatest and best fact in human history. Everyone, or almost everyone, will admit the truth of the last statement; but there is a tendency at the present day, among a highly intellectual school of Churchmen, to lay more stress upon the accretions than upon the essence of Christianity. One hears of divines who are ready to treat the Resurrection of Christ as an allegory, while remaining quite sound on the

Apostolical Succession of the Episcopate. To me this position seems somewhat illogical, and, though I shall no doubt be scolded as anti-clerical, I shall comfort myself by remaining a Christian.

I shall be scolded for other things also; for I have chosen to write 'Mahomet' rather than 'Muhammad,' have spoken frequently of 'France' and 'Germany' before there were any countries generally known by those names, and, while rejecting 'Mayence' and 'Trèves' in favour of 'Mainz' and 'Trier,' have treated 'Cologne' as the English for 'Köln.' I also fear that those who have special knowledge of particular subjects included in the long period, 300-1000 A.D., will be able to point to many mistakes in details.

I owe my greatest thanks to Mr Ernest Barker, Fellow of St John's College, Oxford, for twice carefully reading and revising this volume; to the Rev. Dr Kidd of St Paul's, Oxford, and to Mr D. G. Hogarth, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, for many invaluable corrections and suggestions in the earlier chapters; to Mr John Murray, who has added to his labour of publication a most painstaking and useful examination of my text and notes; and to my son, Mr W. G. Fletcher, for a final revision of the proof from the literary point of view.

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ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER I

The SUBJECTS of this chapter are—(1) The causes of the unsatisfactory condition of the Roman Empire in the third century after Christ, especially its bad economic and financial condition; its barrenness in the realm of the ideal; the reforms of Diocletian and Constantine. (2) Over against this, the history, so far as it can be discovered, of the early years of the Christian Church down to the great persecution of 303, usually attributed to Diocletian; what the Church's 'tradition' meant to her; what she borrowed from other faiths; wherein she was well equipped for fighting the battle against paganism; the growth of her creeds, her canon, her priesthood, her self-government.

For the PERSONS who will be mentioned in the chapter, the only table that seems to be necessary is a list of the *more important* of the Roman emperors. I use the names by which each is most commonly known. For the successors to Diocletian, see Table to Chapter II.

	B.C. / A.D.		A.D.
Augustus	27	to	14
	A.D.		A.D.
Tiberius	14	„	37
Caligula	37	„	41
Claudius	41	„	54
Nero	54	„	68
Galba	68	„	69
Otho	69		
Vitellius	69		
Vespasian	69	„	79
Titus	79	„	81
Domitian	81	„	96
Nerva	96	„	98
Trajan	98	„	117
Hadrian	117	„	138
Antoninus Pius	138	„	161
Marcus Aurelius	161	„	180

	A.D.		A.D.
Septimius Severus	193	to	211
Caracalla	211	„	217
Decius	249	„	251
Valerian	253	„	260
Gallienus	260	„	268
Claudius II. (Gothicus)	268	„	270
Aurelian	270	„	275
Probus	276	„	282
Diocletian	284	„	305

CHAPTER I

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE EMPIRE, AND THE INFANCY OF THE CHURCH

PROXIME Dis Consul, qui tantae prospicis Urbi,
Qua nihil in terris complectitur altius aether ;
Cujus nec spatium visus, nec corda decorem,
Nec laudem vox ulla capit ; quae luce metalli
Aemula vicinis fastigia conserit astris ;
Quae septem scopulis zonas imitatur Olympi,
Armorum legumque parens ; quae fundit in omnes
Imperium, primique dedit cunabula juris.
Haec est, exiguis quae finibus orta tetendit
In geminos axes, parvaque a sede profectas
Dispersit cum Sole manus. Haec obvia fatis,
Innumeras uno gereret cum tempore pugnas,
Hispanas caperet, Siculas obsideret urbes,
Et Gallum terris prosterneret, aequore Paenum,
Nunquam succubuit damnis, et territa nullo
Vulnere, post Cannas major Trebiamque fremebat ;
Et cum jam premerent flammae, murumque feriret
Hostis, in extremos aciem mittebat Iberos.
Nec stetit Oceano ; remisque ingressa profundum
Vincendos alio quaesivit in orbe Britannos.
Haec est, in gremium victos quae sola recepit,
Matris, non dominae, ritu : civesque vocavit
Quos domuit, nexuque pio longinqua revinxit.
Hujus pacificis debemus moribus omnes,
Quod veluti patriis regionibus utitur hospes ;
Quod sedem mutare licet ; quod cernere Thulen
Lusus, et horrendos quondam penetrare recessus ;
Quod bibimus passim Rhodanum, potamus Orontem ;
Quod cuncti gens una sumus. Nec terminus unquam
Romanae ditionis erit.[1]

[1] Consul, our next to God ! preserve this State
Beyond all else in the World's compass great !

THESE lines were not written, as one might suppose them to have been, at the date when Trajan had extended the *Pax Romana* over the civilised world, and the Roman Empire was at the height of its glory and prosperity; but nearly three hundred years later when the Empire was tottering to its fall, and Alaric was marshalling his Goths for the sack of Rome. The consul whom the last poet of the ancient world thus addressed was a Vandal and probably a traitor. But Virgil himself could not have

The breadth of Rome's domain what view can reach?
What heart her loveliness? her fame what speech?
With burnish'd pinnacles that gleam on high
She flings her challenge to the star-sown sky,
Mother of War and Peace! whose mountains seven
Mimick on earth the order'd spheres of Heaven;
Who, ere her hand had tam'd the World to awe,
Nurs'd in her walls the cradle of all Law;
From one small city to her outmost goal
Her battle line was flung from pole to pole;
The Fate, that envied her, beheld with fear
Her hundred fights in one triumphant year,
Beleaguered Sicily, dismantled Spain,
Gaul crush'd on land, and Carthage on the main;
No loss could daunt her, no defeat could tire,
Trebia but rous'd and Cannae warm'd her ire,
While she, the boasted spoil of hostile brands,
Marshall'd by Ebro's bank her war-worn bands,
Nor stopped for ocean, till with prosp'rous oar
Her navies moor'd by Britain's sunless shore.
She—prouder boast than other conqueror knew—
Gently her captives to her bosom drew,
Mother not mistress, made the thrall her kin
And 'neath her wing call'd all the Nations in.
Who owes, and owes not to her parent sway
His civick rights in utmost lands to-day?
His pastime journeys the wide Empire o'er,
Thule or the horrid desert to explore?
Orontes knows in Syria, Rhone in Gaul
One speech, one race, one governance for all,
Whatever is Earth is Rome; Rome stands till Earth shall fall![1]

[1] I owe this translation to my friend, Mr R. A. Knox, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford.

uttered a more adoring or a more utterly sincere belief in Roma Dea.

If the starting-point of all intelligent interest in the past is wonder, there surely never was such a subject for wonder as the Roman Empire. And perhaps the most astonishing thing about it is, the very short time during which it was what we should now call a 'flourishing organic state.' Financially, it seems never to have been sound at all. The conquests both of the Republic and the Principate seem to have been largely irrespective of any desire for the opening of new markets,[1] nor were they prompted by expansion of population; individuals reaped enormous wealth from them, but, in spite of the theory that the lands of the conquered were State property, the State profited little, except in the exemption from direct taxes that Italy enjoyed in consequence. Economically, the capital came very early in its history to depend not upon its own *campagna*, or even upon Italy, but upon distant provinces, first Sicily, then Africa, then Egypt,[2] for its daily bread. Still more are we astonished to read that at least as early as the end of the third century the chief transactions between the State and the taxpayer, as well as those between landlord and tenant, were based upon payments in kind;[3] that coin was disappearing, and that what the Germans call mediæval *Naturwirthschaft* had begun. Diocletian, by an edict in 301, actually attempted to fix the prices of all commodities all over the Empire.

The native religion of Rome seems to have been as

[1] The conquest of Britain was perhaps directed to the expansion of the existing market of Gaul.

[2] From the reign of Augustus, the Roman corn supply was derived one-third from Africa, one-third from Egypt, and one-third from Sicily, Sardinia, Southern Spain, and Italy. Constantine the Great diverted the Egyptian third to feed the mob of his new capital.

[3] The depreciation of the currency and some very drastic economic 'reforms' of Diocletian having made money payments almost impossible, everything came to rest upon the *annona*, or payment of taxes in corn, out of which the State paid its soldiers in the same commodity, with occasional supplements in the shape of donatives in gold ornaments, or coins specially struck for the occasion.

dull, as formal, as uninspiring, as it is possible for a religion to be. Her material for folk tales of glorious ancestors in a remote past was very slender. The Romans were, indeed, essentially a history-loving people; they clung to this material and thumbed it over and over again, and, when at last a perfect poet arose to express the epic of Early Rome in one perfect poem, he was lifted at once to the gods, among whom he has remained ever since. But Greece or Norway had a hundred golden legends where Rome had but one; and the groundwork of this one, apart from the magic with which Virgil invested it, would strike a person, previously acquainted only with Norse or Greek mythology, as very poor stuff.

Roman literature had one glorious outburst in the last days of the Republic and the first of the Principate, but that golden age was the briefest in the history of any serious people; it was gone like a flash, and what followed it was little better than erudite imitation. As for the Latin language, even of that age, one of its greatest poets, Lucretius, speaks of its poverty (*egestas*); it needed a Virgil and a Cicero to make it a classical language at all. When, however, they had wrought it into shape, its after-success was amazing. No language has had such a long or such a useful history as Latin; it was able to adapt itself to all the needs of European thought for seventeen centuries, and even to take, by the pens of the hymn-writers from St Ambrose onwards, a new life when everything else that was Roman was rapidly decaying. Yet one feels that even this success was more a result of the great influence of the Roman Empire than of any intrinsic merit; as a vehicle for the highest thought, Latin could never challenge comparison with Greek. In the sphere of arms, indeed, as Claudian's lines prefixed to this chapter show us, Roman valour, patience, discipline, and skill were destined to wear down all opponents. But even to the arms of Rome there were dreadful shocks; one of the very worst was the annihilation of Varus and his legions in the Teutoburger Wald, near the source of the river Lippe, by the German Arminius in A.D. 9. But from Cannae to Carrhae, from

Carrhae to Edessa, from Edessa to Adrianople, some *dirus Afer*, some Gaul or Goth or Persian is generally at the gates, although happily, once the dreadful African has been disposed of, those gates are, until the middle of the third century, sufficiently distant from the heart of the Empire. As a naval power one feels that Rome might have done much better than she did. For two centuries at the outside she was able to keep the Mediterranean, which she then absolutely enclosed, free from Greek pirates, whose energies, except during that time, continued unabated from the dawn of history down to the age of steamships. Mommsen calls her omission to police her other maritime spheres of influence, the Red Sea, the Black Sea, and the northern coasts of Gaul, 'her hereditary sin.' Even Augustus substituted cruisers (Liburnian galleys) for dreadnoughts (*triremes*, *quadriremes*, and *quinqueremes*), as the units of his Mediterranean fleet. There was no trade more despised in ancient Italy than that of sailor. Finally, as for the persons who prided themselves upon being the 'Roman people,' the *plebs* of the city seems, from the middle of the second century before Christ, to have been as fickle, as cowardly, as degraded as it was in the worst days of Papal Rome. The Patricians had, indeed, glorious traditions from the recent past; they had been the making, and, in every crisis, the saving of the State and the Empire; but the proscriptions of the centuries immediately preceding and following Our Saviour's birth had reduced these old families to a number that men could count on their fingers; and, by the fourth century of our era, though pedigrees, often false, were still religiously kept, senatorial rank was a mere status conferred by the favour of the emperor, and usually won in his service. The people of the rural districts of Italy were, indeed, much better and long remained so; but, before that same fourth century, the false economic policy of the Empire had crushed all the life out of rural Italy.

And yet the Roman dominion and the civilisation that it brought was, and still is the greatest factor in history.

How are we to explain this? Shall we say, with Machiavelli, that men are 'a bad lot' (*tristi*—sad dogs, he says), and that success is the guerdon of the worst? Shall we listen to the mediæval churchmen, who saw in the whole history of Rome a divinely prepared seed-bed for the infancy of the Christian Church?[1] I like that explanation better than the other, but I am afraid that the details of the history both of Empire and Church refute it. There is, however, a stratum of truth, unknown to the mediæval churchmen, at the bottom of the explanation. The very men who ignored the Christians most, the great jurists of the third century, were unconsciously paving the way for the Church by proclaiming that there is a Supreme Equity and even an Equality above all the technical distinctions of Roman law, of national and provincial custom; and so much was this the case that, when the alliance of Empire and Church did come, it seemed the most natural thing in the world on its legal side if upon no other. Nay, there is much to be said for the view that would carry this union further down the stream of history, and would look upon the Church as 'the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.' The Church certainly reproduced much of the organisation of the Empire, and kept alive, by sympathy as pathologists would say, the shadow of the Empire, though it quarrelled with that shadow incessantly.

The history of the Empire refutes at any rate a Machiavellian explanation of Rome's success, for it was the good qualities of the Romans and not their bad ones which left their mark upon time. And among these we must recognise first and foremost their rooted, prosaic common-sense, their tolerance for other people's absurdities, together with their curiously tenacious belief in themselves

[1] St Augustine is the earliest authority for the story of the 'Vision of Augustus,' which must have been an early tradition of the Church. Augustus saw a virgin passing fair standing upon an altar, holding a man-child in her arms. He consulted the Sibyl, who replied in hexameters, much too bad to have been written by Augustine, that this was a sign of judgment; and that the King should come from heaven, incarnate in the flesh, to judge the world (*De Civitate Dei*, xviii., 23).

and their fortune. A Roman felt, besides, a need for 'realising himself' in the spheres of government, command, and the keeping of order. To that feeling and that belief Europe, as we know it, owes the debt of mere existence. If Rome had not fought to the death that dreadful African, those Gauls, Goths, Persians and Huns, if she had not taken on herself the task of administering what she rescued from them, there would have been no civilised Europe to-day. In that feeling and belief came to be summed up all the aspirations, all the religion of the best Romans. All the dear, if stupid, rustic gods of Latium, all the innumerable foreign gods who were tolerated and even welcomed at Rome, were of little account compared to ROMA DEA, the one abstraction which every Roman could adore; and the so-called worship of the 'Genius' of the living Princeps was merely a concrete expression of this feeling, a feeling which was, in the Latin sense of the words, at once 'religious' and 'sacramental.' And to this must be added a system of law, which, beginning in a form extremely and even pedantically rigid, vitalised itself in continuous expansion and continuous adaptation to the needs of the growing Empire.

That growing Empire was a great deal better off than its capital city. True, a province like Gaul or Africa was at its first conquest generally skinned bare by victorious Roman generals, and the civilian crowd of plunderers which followed in their wake. But once the Roman system of administration was established, there was before the third century little to complain of. The main geographical frontiers had been reached at the time of the Christian era or soon afterwards; and from that date, for nearly two centuries, the condition of the provinces was one of improving happiness. And I suppose that improving happiness upon any serious scale was then a new thing in the history of the world, which, down to that time, had been marked either by bondage to some grinding Eastern despotism,[1] or by the 'irregular jostling and hewing of masterless men.'

[1] This may be deemed too sweeping a criticism for a period which

To most of her subjects Rome allowed a very fair measure of self-government. Some provinces were wholly free both from tribute and levy of soldiers. Nearly every province had a *Concilium* at which each *civitas* (*i.e.*, city and district) was represented; this body occasionally assessed its own taxes and often presented grievances. If it was not in the strict sense an elective assembly, it seems to have been attended by deputies from the class of *curiales*, i.e., actual and potential magistrates of the *civitas;* it was not convoked or dissolved by the emperor, but met of itself, probably on some festal day, and had a religious basis. An edict of Honorius, in 418, apparently re-establishes the Provincial Assembly of Southern Gaul at the very time when the Goths were permitted to settle there. When the emperor interfered with a strong hand, it was usually because the 'local authorities' had got their province or their city into a hopeless condition of debt. All over the East the people of the Greek and half-Greek cities continued to live their own lives and to develop, in a peace they had never known before, their ancient civilisations, restrained by the Roman Governor only from putting each other to death. As for 'questions of their law,' Gallio, as we know, cared for none of these things. In the West, where there were no ancient civilisations to develop themselves, except in a fringe of Greek colonies along the Mediterranean, Rome introduced the elements of civil life. Round her military stations grew up centres, called *coloniæ* and *municipia* (look how we speak her language to-day on all subjects connected with law, order, government), which became the great cities of Italy, Gaul, Spain, Britain, and South Germany. As each province was reduced and the conquering legions moved to guard its frontiers, these cities ceased

included the Macedonian Empire; but that empire and its offshoots, though they spread Hellenic culture, were in fact based upon the mailed fist and nothing else. It is a criticism that may possibly have to be modified, if we ever learn more about the systems of government of the older Oriental monarchies, concerning which most people are too apt to take their conceptions from the Hebrew Scriptures.

to be military stations at all. Few of them were even walled until the third or fourth century; there can be no better proof of the *Pax Romana*. By whatever agency Rome ruled her provinces, it was certainly not by the sword.[1]

If we cannot claim that such an empire would be a nursing mother of new ideas, we can see that it would be an excellent seed-bed for them. We must always remember that more than half of its territory was actually a Greek inheritance, and that over the rest of it Greek merchants were continually travelling. Even in the West, cities like Marseilles, islands like Sicily were so full of Greeks that they were never really Romanised at all; to-day Marseilles with its 'Acropolis' looks like a Greek city. Southern Italy itself was more Greek than Roman; even the possession of Virgil's grave could not make Naples anything but a Greek community. Greek philosophy was, after a short period of mistrust, welcomed and at last caressed by such of the lettered Romans as could understand it. One school of it, the Stoic, really chimed in with much that was best in the old Roman character. Claudius, Nero, Hadrian, among the early emperors, were enthusiasts for all things Greek; and Marcus Aurelius wrote his much over-praised *Meditations* in that language. The Motherland of Culture, Hellas itself, was petted and spoiled by the Romans 'like some beautiful woman who is not expected to respond except by remaining beautiful.' In fact the wily Greek not only took captive but took in his staid, dull conqueror.[2]

He was by no means the Greek of the Age of Pericles; nay, he was too often a Greekling without morals, religion, or elevation of intellect; but always πολύτροπος, always of boundless curiosity. Even while yielding to his blandish-

[1] The sole garrison of Gaul in the second century, with the exception of the legions on the Rhine, was a body of 1200 men kept at Lyons.

[2] 'However much the Greeks showed the Romans that their labour of love was a forlorn one, this made no change either in the labour or in the love.'—Mommsen, *Provinces of the Roman Empire*, i., 254.

ments, the best of the Romans must sometimes have despised him. He sapped the vitality of the old Latin beliefs, as he sapped the virility of the old Latin people, and, until the rise of Christianity, he substituted nothing believable for them. In marched strange Eastern deities, and took possession of many empty, swept, and garnished Roman hearts.

Unnoticed at first by the side of the Egyptian Isis, the Phrygian Magna Mater, the Persian Mithras, crept in a Jewish deity of whom men spoke as Chreistus, Chrestus, or Christus.[1] At first it was largely slaves and women who spoke of Him. At His altar there was no respect of persons or sexes, no differentiation of bond or free. Women were indeed remarkably emancipated — old Romans said too much emancipated—in the first three centuries of our era, but all the traditions both of Greece and Rome regarded them as inferior beings. As for slaves, whose numbers then probably equalled the total number of free inhabitants of the Empire, the law as yet gave them no protection, or next to none. Slavery had, indeed, long been a problem; Aristotle had been driven to write a very lame defence of it, but it was not recognised by the great jurists as any part of the 'Law Natural.' Yet the economic system of the ancient world rested on it, and even those who most felt its cruelty, its wastefulness, and its absurdity, were obliged to say that no one could get on without it. You will notice that the early Christians seldom said anything against it as a system of relations between man and man; all they said was that it did not enter into the relations between man and God. A slave might be the Bishop of Rome, and might call upon the loftiest patrician to obey him as his spiritual son.

But such a doctrine was fundamentally at variance with all old Roman ideas. Even more at variance was the

[1] The $\epsilon\iota$ and ι and ϵ are easily interchangeable sounds, and even η is found—$\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\acute{o}s$ means 'good,' 'worthy,' 'of happy omen.' See Rackham, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 170. The *locus classicus* for 'Chrestus' is Suetonius, Claudius, sect. 25.

other message which the Christians had for the Roman world:—'Thou shalt have none other gods but Me.' Neither Roma Dea, nor the little gods of the Roman household, at whom St Augustine afterwards delighted to poke rather clumsy fun, still less the beautiful naughty anthropomorphic gods of Greece have any existence at all; or rather they have an existence and are, in fact, 'demons.' The Church did no doubt, from time to time, borrow customs and doctrines from these, and still more from the Eastern faiths; and, when it was victorious, it was obliged to make some terms with the deeply rooted little local worships, merely substituting a saint for a nymph or a god as guardian of a well or patron of a city. But as 'gods' it never would have anything to say to them except *Anathema estote.*

Even to this attitude the tolerant Roman law took but one exception. In the person of the reigning Princeps Roma Dea must be venerated by all men. When called upon to prove your loyalty, you must cast your pinch of incense upon the pedestal of the emperor's statue. It meant little more than we mean nowadays by taking an oath of allegiance to King George; good people who object to swearing oaths are now allowed to 'affirm' their allegiance in other fashions, and one would have thought that ingenious Roman lawyers might have devised some compromise for a Christian whose loyalty was really beyond all doubt. But the better the Roman Governor, the less could he understand a sect which put religion before patriotism; the act was so slight, so formal, that he thought that refusal must really mean disloyalty of some secret kind. Yet to the good Christian this little act was the recognition of another god, and that god a living, and often very bad man; and hence this act became a touchstone or rather *the* touchstone of the Faith. Enormous numbers of Christians no doubt complied and cast their pinch of incense, and it depended upon the temper of their bishops and brethren whether or no they could be received back into the fold after compliance. But the great-hearted ones refused, and death was the penalty of

refusal. It is impossible to ascertain, and futile to guess at the number of martyrs in the several persecutions of three centuries; only we may be sure that it was not one-tenth of what the mediæval Church believed it to have been. It was probably not one-hundredth of the number of Christian 'heretics' who suffered death at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century.

You can easily understand that this attitude of the Christians rendered them profoundly unpopular with the mobs of the great cities, cruel and fickle as all mobs in all cities always are. And, though the Christian community was undoubtedly loyal, and in the mass patriotic, its kingdom was not of this world, which was, indeed, in its eyes but a fleeting show. The Second Advent was probably very near, and then Roma Dea, Princeps, prætors, lions, and executioners would be of little account. Even as early as the second century there are found instances in which Christian writers apply to Rome the description and denunciation of Babylon from the Jewish Scriptures and the Apocalypse.[1] There were instances also—Tertullian was one—of Christians who openly exhorted their brethren to abstain from all worldly duties and from all service to the State, if not actually to rush forward and denounce the State as an organisation based upon evil. Again, though there were many pious and valiant Christian soldiers in the ranks of the army, there were a few instances in which men of the new Faith openly refused military service. A patriotic Roman might well be excused if he looked upon such persons as rebels and traitors. Were they not an offshoot of the Jews, whose conquest had cost the Empire such rivers of blood in 69-70 and in several later insurrections?—Yes, and these had been mainly religious insurrections also. Finally, the Christians were, to a large extent, a secret society, about whose mystic rites men told each other ludicrously false tales.

[1] Indeed it is quite a tenable theory that passages in the Apocalypse are actually directed against Rome.

Hence, if a man would be so obstinate as to die for an opinion, which involved at least a presumption of disloyalty, an opinion, too, which he either would not or could not explain to the Prætor—well, the lions were hungry, other criminals were perhaps scarce, the mob was clamorous and might easily become dangerous. In the third century we also find traces of an idea, which Rome in her better days would have repudiated, that the 'gods are athirst' and must be appeased with the blood of those who denied them.[1] As for cruelty, it was always a deeply rooted Roman vice, the origin of which, among such a sober people, I am at a loss to explain. It was not, as with some nations, due to outbursts of passion or fear; it was always there, and it colours the whole of Roman history red. To a Greek, 'games' were just athletic sports;[2] to a Roman, they were a series of horrible butcheries of beasts by beasts, men by beasts, men by men. If the Christian Church had done nothing else but abolish such games for ever—and it did not succeed in doing so till the beginning of the fifth century—it would have rendered thereby an inestimable service to mankind.

There are, then, a certain number of definitely recorded persecutions of the infant Church, from that of Nero in the first to that of Diocletian at the beginning of the fourth century. The last two, 249-251 and 303-312, were undoubtedly the worst, and extended over the whole Empire, or were intended to do so. From each one of these the Church rose to new vigour and compactness, purified of her weaker elements. No doubt, however, she emerged from each more fierce against her enemies, and more likely, in spite of the commands of her Divine Master, to take her revenge, if ever she should get the upper hand. There was also throughout these centuries a certain amount of

[1] This idea was borrowed, with fatal facility, by the Roman papacy, which, from the twelfth century, consistently preached the duty of exterminating infidels and heretics, and regarded their blood as a sacrifice pleasing to God.

[2] Athens, to her eternal honour, long refused to celebrate Roman games, and when a Roman governor insisted on holding some, the best Athenians simply 'boycotted' the celebration.

sporadic indictment of individual Christians, according to the temper of provincial governors and mobs;[1] but, generally speaking, it needed an imperial order to begin a regular persecution, and such an order was seldom given, for the principle of persecution was alien to the spirit of Roman law.

Meanwhile we have been speaking of the 'Church' and 'Christians' without perhaps realising that the words might not then mean all they mean to us. And, as this little book is going to be a history of some Christian peoples, we had better try to penetrate the darkness which hangs over the early history of Christianity. The darkness is much thicker than most men think it to be. The pagan writers seldom mention the Society, and totally misconceive it when they do; among the vast multitude of old Roman inscriptions remaining to us, those that can with certainty be called Christian are very few even in the third century, and before that are almost non-existent; those that remain in the Roman catacombs, which were undoubtedly Christian burying-places, were all furbished up or garbled after the triumph of Christianity. In the last and greatest of the persecutions it is probable that the leaders of the Church destroyed most of their own records.

One thing, however, is tolerably clear, and that is the Jewish origin of the Church. The Divine Christ was a Jew; the great Apostle Paul was a devout Jewish sectary; the earliest Christians spoke and preached to Jews, and in the vernacular tongue of Palestine; a 'Church,' in the sense of a human society with rules and rulers, was first constituted at Jerusalem. The very order of service in our own glorious Prayer-book, with its prayers, psalms, and lessons, is based upon the order which had been used in Jewish synagogues. Nay more, when the Church at last emerges into the light of day at the beginning of the fourth

[1] In Asia Minor the Greek magistrates in the self-governing Greek cities seem often to have been the originators of persecution, although on occasions they refused to listen to the mob, *e.g.*, at the riot at Ephesus described in the Acts of the Apostles.

century, we find that the bulk of the old Jewish Scriptures and much of the old Jewish beliefs have been incorporated with her canon and her doctrines. Yet by that time there is nothing she hates so much as a Jew, and the Jew returns the hatred in full measure! The origin of this hatred is not far to seek. The Jews demanded Our Saviour's death not because He made Himself the Son of God, but because He declared Himself to be *our* Saviour as well as theirs. Their great intelligence was well able to see that He might indeed be—only too probably was—the Messiah of their prophets, but, as He avowed that He came to redeem not only Abraham's seed but the whole world, they shut their ears to His message. Now the Jews were to be found everywhere all over the Empire, some Hellenized and some not, and they swarmed especially at Rome and Alexandria; to the last they remained a 'nation,' and practically the only nation within the borders of the Empire,[1] and in the first and second centuries their national spirit gave the Roman Government more trouble than all its frontiers put together. It was small wonder if the Church, however hostile, failed to get rid altogether of her Jewish origin. But during the interval—her Dark Ages of which we know so little—between the death of St Paul and the conversion of Constantine, she had done her best to repudiate that Jewish origin, and had become Greek. This change must have been a very early one. Greek is her articulate language, the language in which all the world may hear her voice, probably the language of her earliest written records; the Greek cities of the near East are her first conquest outside Palestine. Within seventy years from Christ's birth Jerusalem has been made an heap of stones, and then rebuilt with a Latin name; on the site of Jehovah's Temple is now the shrine of Venus.

During this same interval the Church has been forced,

[1] We must distinguish carefully between the Jews 'of the Dispersion' (which had begun long before the fall of Jerusalem) to whom the Empire accorded special privileges, who were both loyal and largely Hellenized, and the 'Zealots,' who made insurrection in Judæa in 69-70 and again in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian.

as all societies must be forced, to give herself some kind of constitution, some basis of self-government, some species of rulers of the several territorial spheres of her influence (some will perhaps call these early rulers 'bishops,' or overseers, some will call them 'presbyters' or elders; shall we not say at once the words are synonymous?) Some sort of tests or symbols too she will have been getting, to distinguish her members from non-Christians; later on she will call these symbols *creeds*, and her members will fight a good deal over their contents and limits. The earliest of them are probably formulas in which a candidate for baptism will have to make his profession; they may differ in detail in the different Churches. We do not know the words of these earliest symbols; the Three Creeds, as we now have them, are all much later than their names imply, but may reasonably be supposed to be based upon very much earlier tests.[1] But, long before the days of symbols, creeds or formulated doctrine, we may be sure that Christianity set itself to be a *rule of life*. Its most distinctive possession, which all men will agree to be of utterly Divine origin, was its superior moral code, expounded to the world by the Very God himself, who came upon earth in the form of man in order to expound it. It was just that which the world of the Roman Empire needed most. It is very easy to exaggerate the wickedness of a society which has perished, or is in the act of perishing; the wickedness of the Græco-Roman world was a favourite theme for all Christian writers from Paul to Salvian. It is of course not to be supposed that all Christians became at once, upon their conversion, patterns of morality; and, on the other hand, it would be foolish to ignore the lofty moral doctrines of the Stoic philosophers, the theory of benevolence of the Epicureans, or the virtuous lives lived by many old

[1] The actual wording of the 'Apostles' Creed' may be dated at about 750 A.D.; but it is virtually the Creed of the Roman Church as early as 341, which, again, differs little from a form in use at the beginning of the second century. The 'Nicene' may be dated at 381; and the 'Athanasian' at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century.

Roman Pagans; but the general proposition will remain that a society based upon slavery is not likely to be pure; one that loved the games of the arena, to be humane; one that drew no sanctions from its vague beliefs in a future life, to be self-restrained. The Christian Church had to preach purity, temperance, mercy, forgiveness, reverence, to a society which had the utmost need for her sermons.

Then, again, we may be sure that in these her Dark Ages the Church is essentially a brotherhood, a 'flock'—Christ Himself had used the words, and had loved the homely illustration from the shepherd-life of His native hills. Its meetings are secret, at first in the private house of some believer, later in some building probably bare of any image or ornament. If legal sanction is required for such meeting, it will be granted to the Church in the guise of a 'burial club.' As such a club, but as that only, it may purchase a piece of ground for the interment of its members; and several of the 'catacombs' of Rome no doubt served the double purposes of cemeteries and churches. Into this flock men are initiated by a rite older than Christ's birth, but one which He had sanctioned by His own use of it. The Church may make this rite of baptism as mystic as she pleases, and she may require a long probation before admission to it;—the more mystic she makes it, the more likely is she to impress her converts. It is in any case far purer, far more simple and lovely than the gruesome initiation-ceremonies of other contemporary faiths. And she has another symbol of brotherhood or Communion which, as the Past recedes, she is gradually making ever more and more mystic. We do not know one hour in her history in which the germs of this rite are not visible, and it is always in some way a commemoration of her Lord's last supper with His disciples. It is celebrated on her 'holy day,' the day of her Lord's Resurrection. As the doors are shut when it is celebrated, the ignorant world tells false and malevolent tales about it. Perhaps even some of those who take part in it are not wholly μύσται, and hardly know whether it is a Love-feast or a sacrifice. What its shape may have been in the third century we have little

means of knowing; Dr Headlam, one of the first of living theologians, thinks that 'some modern Christians would have been singularly uncomfortable, morally as well as physically, if they had attended any religious service in the catacombs.' Down to the ninth century, Baptism was probably regarded as the more important of the two greater sacraments; the opinion of the Church upon the grace conferred by baptism hardly fluctuated at all, while upon the Eucharist very widely differing opinions were at different times held, until the strangely materialist doctrine of transubstantiation was laid down.[1] But, whatever the form of Baptism and of the Eucharist, it was these rites which then bound all Christians together, even as the *Sacramentum*, or oath of the Roman soldier, bound him to the eagles of his legion.

Another thing at which the Church has been arriving during her Dark Ages is some sort of classification of her early records; she is feeling her way towards what we call the 'Canon.' Before 300 A.D. she has claimed that certain of these records are not merely historical documents, but writings of men under directly divine inspiration,[2] and she reaps some advantage from the fact that some of these records (the Jewish Scriptures) contain a comparatively intelligible history of the human race from its earliest years. Certain other records she is inclined to reject from her Canon without wholly condemning them; such are the so-called 'Apocryphal Gospels,' which were the favourite reading of less educated Christians; on these much of the tradition of the Mediæval Church will be based.

Another change of which we can trace the process but dimly has been the growth of a priesthood. There have

[1] By Paschasius Radbert, in his *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, in 844.

[2] St Mark's Gospel, believed to have been virtually the work of St Peter, is now assigned to 60 A.D., and may be fairly assumed to be the first 'written record'; a New Testament Canon, including at least the four Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles of St Paul, was complete though not 'closed' by 200 A.D.; and the present Canon was 'closed' two centuries later.

been religions in history which have dispensed with this—Islam is one—and we must always beware of confusing 'priests' with 'rulers' of a church. But Christianity, perhaps because of its descent from Judaism, perhaps from some absorption of Egyptian and Persian ideas, begins early to invest its rulers with true priestly functions, *i.e.*, functions of mediation between God and man and functions of sacrifice, neither of which can be clearly traced in the age of the apostles.[1] However this may be, by the third century bishops are recognised both as rulers and as supreme priests, divinely ordained and inspired, the successors of the apostles. Already we can see a tendency to limit the benefits of God's mercy to those who accept the ordinances of these bishops and priests.

Lastly, though up to, say 300 A.D., we may fairly surmise that no hard and fast line can have been drawn between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, we know that the Church has often had conflicts within herself. The different races of her membership have naturally looked upon doctrines and practices with very different eyes; even geographical features have not been without their influence upon the minds of believers. Her creeds when

[1] '*Ἱερεύς*' is found in Christian writings as early as 120 A.D., 'Sacerdos,' 'ara,' not before Tertullian; but *λειτουργούντων* is applied to Barnabas and his companions in Acts xiii., and St Paul (Romans xv. 16) calls himself *λειτουργὸν ἱερουργοῦντα τὸ ἐναγγέλιον*. Our A.V. has 'ministering' as the translation in both passages. Clement of Rome uses *λειτουργεῖν θεῷ* and *λειτουργεῖν τῷ ποιμνίῳ*. The word, which usually means in the classics 'to perform public duties or services,' is, of course, frequently applied to priestly duties. It is a very difficult question. The heathen world knew of priests too; a Roman noble became a *flamen* or priest of some particular god, and performed priestly functions in his temple merely as an honourable stage in his official career. The Princeps took among his other titles that of *Pontifex Maximus*, or official Pope of the old Latin rites, without the slightest idea of becoming thereby more 'sacred.' Jewish priests were, of course, of hereditary and sacred caste, and such has been the status of priests in most other religions. But all, except the Christian priests, were mainly sacrificers,—not prophets and pastors also. Perhaps the very earliest Christian conception was that 'Christ is our High Priest,' and that all Christians are 'priestly ministers,' without any idea of 'sacrificial' duties.

they come to be made must, after all, be the sum or symbol of the beliefs of her members. As law usually follows approved custom, so do creeds follow generally approved belief, and traces even of popular superstition will be found in them. But a 'general consensus' will gradually get fixed as to what is, and what is not 'orthodox.' In fixing this orthodoxy, the Church will have had to spurn from her fold many 'false brethren' too apt to set up their own private judgment, their αἵρεσις or 'heresy,' against the judgment of those whom she acknowledges to have been her great leaders, her 'Fathers.' On the one side there have been the ultra-Mystics or 'Gnostics,' who have imagined one kind of creed for the ordinary Christian, and a special one for the more illumined Christian; they have invented strange asceticisms of the 'touch not, taste not, handle not' order; and on the other side there have been the ultra-Puritans or 'Montanists,' who were for denouncing all learning and all intercourse with the heathen world. But the wise Fathers have steered a middle course between them. These Fathers have been the protagonists in the strife, not only against false brethren but against the might of heathen law. Ignatius and Justin and Cyprian have died for the faith, and we have actually seen them die. Tertullian, the fiery African, has denounced our enemies so openly, so vehemently that it seems a miracle that he ever escaped. Origen, the greatest of all the early Fathers, has been long in hiding and in extreme danger and dies in prison at last; and he is so great and so acute a reasoner that, in the fourth century, we shall not feel quite certain that he was not a heretic. These Fathers and many other bishops have held 'Councils' (no doubt at first obscure little meetings, but ever growing in size and boldness) to fix the date of Easter and other festivals, and generally to decide what is and what is not 'Catholic'—the word is found early in the second century. A hundred and fifty years after this a Council actually deposes a Bishop of Antioch, and puts in a new one, without consulting the Christians of Antioch on the subject—nay it openly appeals to a heathen

emperor, Aurelian, to confirm its sentence, and he, treating the whole question as one of property, confirms it.

It is men like these who have built up what is after all the Church's greatest asset, her *Tradition*, in whose unbroken continuity she never ceases to believe. Going behind even these men she claims to know of a complete *catena* reaching to the Apostolic Age. Irenæus was the disciple of Polycarp who had talked with the aged St John. Clement of Rome must have known St Paul (who mentions a Clemens in his Epistles), and had quite possibly known St Peter also. It is a slender thread? a thread capable of being seriously twisted in three centuries? Yes; but it is one which no Christian had any personal interest in twisting. That there were additional strands woven on to this thread, that there were doctrines added which would have astonished the Galilæan fishermen whom Christ chose as his first apostles, few would now deny. Few too would, I suppose, now claim that 'the Church' of any age was continuously, or even at intervals, inspired from on High; but the great thing for her was that she honestly believed herself to be so inspired.

A society thus equipped and compact was likely to prove no mean antagonist even to the Cæsars and Roma Dea. Even were we to grant that many of her weapons were forged during the strife, many stolen unconsciously from the armouries of other faiths, the superiority of the Church as a mere fighting-machine will appear when we have considered, as we now must, the moral, spiritual, economic and intellectual barrenness of her opponent.

If we are to do this properly, we must be allowed to look a little ahead and trespass on the domain properly belonging to the next chapter; for the struggle between the Church and paganism was by no means over with the conversion of Constantine. First, then, for questions of thought. Except in the domain of law, in which Rome then produced her greatest jurists and perfected her system of equity, the third century was perhaps the most utterly barren of intellectual life in the history of the Roman world; in the fourth there is a distinct revival, and

a century cannot be called barren which produced a historian like Ammianus Marcellinus, and a poet like Claudian. The former may not always have written in classical Latin, but, after all, 'classical' is a word difficult of definition; an Elizabethan might well complain that John Morley or Alfred Tennyson did not always write classical English. The Romans at least always believed themselves to be 'classical'; but it was a great misfortune for letters that Roman education all over the Empire was wholly diverted towards perfecting the art of talking, called 'Rhetoric.' It was mostly in the hands of Greek schoolmasters and professors, who had such subtilty that they could teach you to argue about nothing, on either side, by the hour together. The writers of the Great Ages of Greece and Rome had said most things worth saying far better than any one else is ever likely to say them, and so their works were studied, and lectured upon, and imitated over and over again without any new ideas being evolved from their study. Pagan and Christian alike were soaked in classical tradition, and it was believed by some Christian writers to be a serious drawback to the Faith that there was nothing for Christian boys to read except the pagan classics. We may indeed rejoice profoundly that the Church, as a whole, refused to reject pagan culture. Even if its 'Fathers' had at any time been willing to do so, the great mass of indifferents who joined the Church after her triumph would have been quite unwilling.

From the date of the foundation of Constantinople, however, the Greek side of pagan culture did begin to lose its hold on the western half of the Empire; the Greek tongue was gradually forgotten in the West. St Augustine, though he had read Plato carefully, admits that his own knowledge of Greek was feeble. In the East Greek culture never wholly died until the fall of Constantinople before the Turks, although oddly enough the name Ἕλλην came in the fifth century to mean 'a pagan.' The last stronghold of paganism was, in fact, the philosophy school at Athens, which had, on that account, to be closed by the Emperor Justinian in 529. Some of its philosophers

calling themselves Neo-Platonists produced in the fourth and fifth centuries both at Athens and Alexandria some very daring and independent ideas, occasionally tinged with Eastern Mysticism. Their methods of argument were not without influence on Christian theology; but I doubt if any of their conceptions have seriously affected the world's stock of thought. In the rest of the pagan portion of the Empire the art of saying things well, whether in Greek or Latin, triumphed over the art of having anything to say; and at last the only people who had anything to say worth hearing were the Christians. From this condemnation, however, we must except one great subject; law was scientifically studied and steadily improved at the schools of Rome, Constantinople, and Beyrout (Berytus); and, in Italy at least, it never wholly ceased to be studied in some fashion throughout the darkest of the Dark Ages.

When we turn to consider the moral barrenness of non-Christian society in these centuries, we must always remember the terrible example set by the capital cities of Rome and Constantinople. Demagogues had inaugurated in the second century before Christ a vast system of State Socialism, which fed the unemployed of Rome at the expense of the industrious in the provinces. This horrible system went on with increasing velocity and at increasing cost. First the unemployed were allowed to purchase corn below cost price; next, they received it free; then it was ready-made into bread for them; then pork, wine and oil were added; worst of all, free admission to the arena was granted to this same class, whose low ideals naturally set the tone of theatrical exhibitions. Beyond bloodshed in great floods, the Roman mob found gross indecency to be the main attraction of the theatre. In the third century A.D., one hundred and seventy-five days in each year were devoted at Rome to shows of one kind or another. The example of the capital was inevitably followed in other great cities. When Constantine made Byzantium the Eastern Capital, and renamed it after himself, he had to treat its mob as the Roman mob was

treated. I have purposely called this a moral and not merely an economic disease, for there can be no morality where there is no incentive to labour. Industrious provincials lost all faith in justice when they knew that the fruits of their labour went to maintain that kind of thing. This course of action of the Roman State and its results are surely not without warning for European states, and especially for Great Britain at the present day.

" Crimes of violence were, before the fourth century, probably rare. At that date we begin to hear of a failing police on the great roads, and of brigandage in the *Campagna* of Rome itself, a district where it remained endemic until the middle of the nineteenth century. If one were to take seriously the most famous novel of the ancient world, the *Metamorphosis* of Apuleius, one would have to believe that brigands abounded in Thessaly in the second century; but I think few people would now take Apuleius seriously. As for the sins of profligacy, which are counted by us as the worst moral offences, they were not so accounted in the heathen world. They were no doubt glaring in many classes, for the vile system of slavery and the great facility of divorce made them easy. But I think that the upper class in pagan society was better in these respects in the third century than in the first, and undoubtedly better in the fourth. The worst that one can say of it is, that it had, as a whole, no guiding principle of morality, nor do I see how there can be such a guiding principle without active religion. Fashion was a poor substitute, although it is clear that in the fourth century it was the fashion to be rather good. Men's lives in the best Roman society were then wholly spent in 'doing the proper thing,' in being polite and sedulously attentive to a round of trivial social duties. That is not in itself a characteristic of wicked societies (though much subterranean wickedness may coexist with it), but it is a deification of what a great French lady once called 'the infinitely little.' An intelligent strenuous European of to-day would have been bored to death in most *coteries* of fourth-century society, whether pagan or Christian.

When we come to the spiritual barrenness of the age, we are on surer ground. The old gods were utterly played out:—

> Apollo from his shrine
> Can no more divine,
> With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.

In the worship of the Sun, in the worships of Isis and of Mithras some, indeed, found a consolation closely akin to that which Christians found in the true faith; the two last religions were founded upon beautiful Nature-myths, and there is no reason to suppose that they did not elevate their worshippers. Each, at times, ran Christianity hard, and either may sometimes have been, as Paul said the Hebrew law was, 'a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ.' Such active religion as there was among the pagans was to be found among the followers of these or kindred gods like the Egyptian Serapis, whose flock was indeed the only one that resisted to bloodshedding the overthrow of a pagan shrine. Besides these Eastern forms, which rose to the dignity of real religions, every species of baser superstition was rife. Talismans, sham oracles, secret magic, were all going full blast long before and long after the triumph of the Church; Jews, and especially Jewesses, were the great purveyors of such things. In an age of these and kindred superstitions, we must not forget that the Christian Church had a message of terror as well as of pity. No heathen religion ever wielded a weapon approaching in effectiveness the threat of eternal punishment. In the fourth century, when the mass of men only half believed, that mass was more than half inclined to tremble; in the fifth and sixth, the 'Church's terrors' revolutionised the ideas of the world.

On the other hand the official religion of the State, the whole business of the Vestal Virgins, with their sacred fire and their guardianship of the 'Seven Fatal Things of Rome,' the old rural festivals, the old Colleges of Augurs and Pontifices, went on, not because anyone believed in them, but from mere innate Roman conservatism. The statuette of Victory in the senate-house was the outward and visible sign of so much past history, and it was nothing

more. One is tempted to regret that the Church, which found little difficulty in Christianising local worships by substituting saints for gods, waged such fierce war on these innocent traditional ceremonies. It would have been so easy and so much in accordance with the later practice of the Church, to turn the rural festivals into royal agricultural shows, to place the guardianship of the *Septem Fatalia* (on which, moreover, no one but the *Vestalis Maxima* ever looked) in the hands of St Peter, to dedicate the Lupercal, where the wolf had suckled the immortal twins, to the Virgin Mary, and to change the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus into the noblest basilica of Christ.

We may conclude this portion of our subject with the reflection that the coming victor in the religious strife was the victor not only because it contained, however much changed from the Primitive Age, the seeds of Life and Truth, but also because it was by far the best organised society of religion then existing.

We have now to look for a brief space at the economic and governmental aspects of the Roman Empire on the eve of its disintegration. As its widest extent that Empire stretched from the Tyne to the Tigris and from the Sahara to the Carpathians.[1] It was covered with a network of excellent roads, provided with posting-houses, at which post-horses were to be hired at reasonable rates. Both the Latin and Greek races are naturally city dwellers, as our words 'civility,' 'urbanity,' 'politeness,' indicate;[2] and the great cities were reckoned to be the chief glory of

[1] This is putting it roughly. The northern European frontier, starting from the mouth of the Ems, strikes south to the Rhine near Nymwegen, and goes up the Rhine to a little below Coblentz; then curves in the shape of a shallow U, of which the eastern side is the Taunus Mountains, and then runs S.S.E. almost to Nordlingen, next bends N.E. and then S.E. in one shallow curve to Kelheim, and there definitely strikes the Danube, which it follows to its junction with the Drave. From this point it runs across the Hungarian plain eastwards, northwards and eastwards again, crosses the Carpathians, and finally reaches the Black Sea at the mouth of the Bug. The other frontiers, which will be of less importance to us, can be followed on the map.

[2] We must not, however, underrate the love of country life and even appreciation of country scenery, which we find equally well

the Empire. All these contained beautiful basilicas (halls of justice) temples, theatres, market-places, and public baths. Over all brooded the Pax Romana; and conditions outwardly favourable for commercial and economic development, so far as these are compatible with a slave system, undoubtedly existed. In the country districts agriculture, stock-raising and mining were almost wholly carried on by slaves; the poorest landowner would have one or two slaves; the greatest might have twenty thousand. The material wealth, or what political economists call the 'capital,' of this ancient world was obviously nothing like that of the same area to-day. The output of necessary commodities was far less, that of mere luxuries proportionately far greater—a fact which of itself spells waste on a huge scale. Interest, which nowadays seldom runs above five per cent., then stood normally at twelve, and was often very much higher. Debt seems to have been the constant condition even of the richest individuals and of many communities. This state of things was no doubt largely due to the absence of what we call 'industrial' capital. Land was the most profitable investment; directly a man became rich he bought land, and when he became poor he could borrow only from a professional usurer or a richer landowner, who, if his debtor could not pay, had no resource but to foreclose. Worse even than the perennial condition of debt was the continual decline in population. Before the end of the second century Marcus Aurelius had found it necessary to invite barbarian settlers to come and colonise the north-eastern provinces.[1] A hundred years

expressed by Virgil and Horace, in the first century B.C., and by Ausonius in the fourth A.D. A rich man's country house with its dependencies was probably the origin of most of our west European villages. Ausonius' 'modest little place' in Gaul had attached to it 300 acres of arable, 50 of meadow, 300 of vineyard, and 700 of wood land. Such an estate would probably be self-sufficient for all ordinary economic purposes.

[1] Plutarch, writing at the beginning of the second century, speaks of the universal ὀλιγανδρία; 'the whole of Greece,' he says, 'could only now put in the field as many hoplites as the city of Megara alone sent to fight at Platæa' (*De Defectu Oraculorum*, 8).

later Aurelian deliberately abandoned the great province of Dacia, and pulled the frontier back to the Danube. Later emperors had constantly to wrestle with the problem of the decrease of population.

In the third century a new and much more explicable cause of trouble made itself felt all over the Empire, the increasing pressure of a thoroughly wasteful system of taxation. The simple bureaucratic government ought not to have been an expensive one to work. The imperial domains were simply enormous, and, so far as we have evidence, the Principes spent the revenue derived therefrom most freely in the service of the State. There was, for the whole, before the days of Diocletian, but one court, one army, one civil service to maintain; the same area to-day has to support a dozen different governments, a dozen armies potentially hostile to each other, half as many navies, and a vast number of unproductive and mischievous politicians. The total imperial revenue annually raised has been calculated, by Dr Hodgkin, not to exceed 6s. 8d. per head of the population. Costly and splendid as the achievements of the 'Public Works Department' were, that department was constantly relieved, and always expected to be relieved, by the gifts made by rich men to their native towns. These gifts, though perhaps occasionally prompted by vanity and by that 'postero-mania' from which all good Romans suffered, were essentially a duty to those who could afford them. They were often on a scale beyond that of the most self-advertising American millionaire of to-day, and they show that here and there private riches must have been immense. Education was paid for out of municipal rates and not out of imperial taxes.

Yet the pressure of taxes was, from decade to decade after 200 A.D., a growing terror.[1] Families of senatorial

[1] Many of the indirect imposts of the Middle Ages can be traced back to the Empire, such as the customs dues at frontiers, the tolls at fords and bridges, the *octroi* dues paid by those who brought provisions for sale to markets, the right to *hospitalitas* enjoyed by officials on circuit, and so on. Perhaps some of these were still farmed and at

rank were wholly exempt, even for their non-Italian lands, from ordinary direct taxation; but very heavy extraordinary taxes[1] fell upon them, as well as the obligation to provide shows in the arena, from which no senator could escape without forfeiting all respect. Senatorial rank had become by the fourth century a mere titular distinction, which it was in the power of the Princeps to give to any one; and it was no doubt very widely given, by which means more and more of the richest estates were withdrawn from the taxable area. Side by side with this you must set the fact that Italy had been wholly exempt from land taxes until the same period, when it was found necessary to abolish her exemption. At the other end of the scale the free non-landowning population of the provincial cities was liable only to a poll tax which did not amount to much. Therefore it was the land tax called *annona* (and paid in kind), and the fact that it fell wholly on the upper-middle and middle class, that was the real evil. Men of these classes, called *curiales* or *decuriones* because the *curiæ* or town councils had originally been elected by all the landowners of the district, were owners of town houses and also of estates varying from enormous sizes down to little holdings of ten acres; they filled unpaid all the offices of their native towns, and had once been proud to fill them. Now the Government demanded a certain definite sum from each province and each *civitas*, and the providing and collecting of this sum fell wholly upon these *curiales*. They had to become what the French call *solidaires* for it,[2] and the

very low rates, although the Empire had abolished the tax-farming which was such a scourge under the Republic. If we are to judge by the total sum poured into the Treasury, we find it difficult to believe in the oppressiveness of the system.

[1] E.g., *aurum oblaticium* (something like the English 'benevolence' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), *collatio glebalis*, a money payment at irregular intervals, and *collatio lustralis* of much the same nature.

[2] We do not know at what date the corporate liability of each *civitas* for its taxes became the rule; but it was before the end of the third century. The whole subject is admirably treated by Mr F. de Zulueta, 'De Patrociniis Vicorum' in Prof. Vinogradoff's *Oxford Legal Studies*, Oxford, 1909.

amount demandable was supposed to be assessed on each man's estate, according to the number of tenancies upon it. A new and careful census of the whole Empire was taken by Diocletian, in which each estate or *fundus* was mentioned by name.

From 289 A.D. onwards there was, first at intervals of five, and soon at intervals of fifteen years, a fresh estimate of the amount demandable, and as a rule the demand was increased just in proportion as the number of contributory units fell. The result was that the middling landowners, the backbone of the Empire, were simply crushed out of existence. The senatorial class no doubt profited to some extent by this ruin of those immediately below them, for the absorption of the smaller landowners by the greater was a marked feature of the fourth and fifth centuries. A form of tenure grew up, without the sanction of the law, but gradually acquiring the powerful sanction of custom, called the *Precarium* or the *Patrocinium*. I surrendered my land to some powerful man, but continued to cultivate it and pay him a rent for it; and, in return, he got me off the taxes. Even if he were not himself legally exempt, he was in a position to make a better bargain with the collector than I was. He could bribe or browbeat the judges and officials; one humorous orator of the fourth century suggests that no judge should be allowed to go out to dinner. Whole villages were thus 'taken into patronage,' and so more and more burdens were thrown on those who remained free. After the triumph of the Church her lands escaped with very light taxes, and she extended her 'patronage' freely. The Crown itself sinned against itself (for its domains were exempt) by taking people into patronage.

We can find traces of even less legal methods of defeating the tax-gatherers. From some small places they were driven off with showers of stones. The Government finding its receipts falling off, turned fiercely upon the payers that remained, and passed law after law to compel them to remain and to continue to pay. It forbade them to seek relief by selling or surrendering their estates to richer men;

it forbade them to exercise any trade or profession, or even to enter the army! 'Stay and be taxed' was its one message to them; and in secret flight, sometimes into voluntary slavery, lay their only resource.[1] Moreover, the Government made the rank of *decurio* hereditary, so that there was no hope that one's children would be better off than oneself: the obvious remedy for this was to have no children. Once we can grasp this dreadful condition of servitude of the best class of the Roman world, we need not trouble ourselves to seek for other causes of its decline and disintegration.

In the artisan and shopkeeping classes a similar state of hereditary servitude was gradually introduced, and was in full working at the end of the third century. Membership of the various trading and manufacturing gilds had once been a coveted privilege of free shopkeepers and artisans. Now it became a *status* and an hereditary *status*. A baker's descendants must go on baking for ever; he whose father was a sausage seller should sell nothing but sausages, but should go on selling them whether he liked the job or not. The Roman Statute Book of the fourth century was full of enactments recalling, under the most stringent penalties, men who had deserted their trades. And this, mind you, was at the very time when the number of slaves was rapidly decreasing, and when one might therefore have hoped that free labour would come to its own.

This decrease of slavery was merely a symptom of the universal ruin impending over the well-to-do. Men were no longer able to purchase more, or even to feed the slaves they had. Emancipation set in with a rush. The great gangs of slaves who had worked the great senatorial estates as stockmen and shepherds began to disappear

[1] Notice the curious contrast between 'ancient' and 'modern' history. Governments and kings from the fourteenth till the nineteenth century more often strove to repress municipal institutions than to encourage them; the Roman Empire in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries tried to compel them to go on existing in their own despite.

from Italy, Gaul and Spain. In the East the change was less marked, because there were fewer large, and more small properties.[1] One curious result of this change will be with us throughout the whole of mediæval, and far into modern history. In order to get their large estates cultivated, landowners began to make contracts with their poorer neighbours or even their own emancipated slaves; these should till the land and pay as rent a proportion of the produce, or pay rent in labour on some portion of the land, and take the produce of some other portion for themselves. Such men were called *coloni*, and out of the colonate grew the system of serfdom and of that double ownership of land which underlay so much of mediæval life. It was probably only this colonate which saved Western Europe from going out of cultivation altogether in the fifth century; very frequently barbarian settlers called *inquilini*, from outside the Empire, were invited to come in and till land upon similar terms. The Government, always anxious to make sure of its taxes, showed itself, from the fourth century at least, and in some cases as early as the third, anxious to extend the colonate; it even distributed waste or ruined lands among the neighbouring owners, and compelled these to settle them and till them. Its own 'plantations' of veteran soldiers upon frontier lands were very laudably conceived but were not an economic success; such men probably lacked special agricultural knowledge, and their produce was undersold, or their estates bought up by richer men. Thus, though there was some hope for the future in the system of the colonate, for the present mere economic ruin hung over the whole western portion of the Empire.

As for the Divus Cæsar, who was the head of this sadly perishing fabric, his position also was undergoing a

[1] The small proprietorship lingered on in the Eastern half of the Empire almost till the tenth century, and may be found co-existing with the system of village communities, to the growth of which the Slavonic invasions of the Balkan peninsula in the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth centuries gave much impulse. From the tenth century *latifundia* began to prevail in the East also.

change, the beginnings of which we may trace as early as the reign of Aurelian. The 'Principate' of Augustus and his immediate successors had originally been a mere union in one person of all the old magistracies of the Roman Republic; the extinction of the Julio-Claudian and Flavian houses in the first century had prevented its becoming anything like a hereditary monarchy. In its best period, the second century, it was recruited by a series of adoptions. In the third the Princeps had become the nominee, and usually the victim of the legions or the Roman mob; successful soldiers or scoundrels bought the Principate by extravagant largesses to the Prætorian Guards. There must, however, have been some free public opinion left in the Empire, for when a really great man, Diocletian, by extraction a mere Dalmatian peasant, was chosen by the soldiers in 284, he was able, apparently without serious opposition, to inaugurate a series of reforms which were carried on by his successor, Constantine. Diocletian reigned for twenty years, and, with a brief period of civil war, Constantine for thirty more. At the end of that period we find that the Principate has become an openly acknowledged despotism, or almost a Sultanate; that the system of administration has been changed from top to bottom; that the division of the Empire into east and west has begun; that the military element entirely dominates the civil at the court of the emperor; that the whole system of taxation has been adapted to feed the army and the army alone, and that the chief seat of government has been moved to Constantinople.

Of these the first change is the least important. Whatever may have been the origin of kingship among primitive peoples, it has always been apt to take upon itself a sort of divinity, and has been most successful and beneficial when its subjects have acquiesced in this. Triumphant Christianity, while it denied the name of God to Constantine, and burned no incense at his statue, unquestionably regarded him as a 'sacred' person, and openly called him so. The barbarian kings, who founded monarchies on the ruins of the Empire, were told by

their bishops that they were sacred, and were, no doubt, glad to believe it. The whole spirit of kingship in the East, near and far, was, and still is of a similar nature. Thus, among the changes that took place in the Roman Empire between 270 and 337, the least were that men prostrated themselves on entering the presence-chamber, that the emperor wore a diadem, and spent a great deal more money on his clothes, food and servants, than the early Principes had spent. Perhaps the greatest advantage that he derived from his enhanced majesty was that he no longer needed to 'explain his policy' to a senate or to anyone in the world; *stat pro ratione voluntas.*

As for the second principle inaugurated by Diocletian, and arrested only for a time and only partially by Constantine, it was indeed the vastest of changes, and one which my readers will understand better when we have considered the penetration of the barbarians into the Empire. But I cannot avoid referring to it here, for it seems to me to point in the direction of the beginning of the mediæval world. When Diocletian[1] divided the Empire into four great prefectures, and these again into thirteen 'dioceses,' each containing a varying number of provinces, he was really recognising the fact that nationalities were coming into existence in spite of Roma Dea. By no means all of these dioceses have grown into modern 'countries,' but it has been their tendency to do so; and, perhaps, had it not been for the conquests of Islam, the prefectures of the East and of Illyricum would now have been divided as much upon Diocletian's lines as his Prefecture of Gaul is into the three great countries of Spain, France, and England.[2] I need not plague you

[1] Some writers will attribute only the diocesan system to Diocletian, and suggest that the prefectures were a natural grouping of dioceses which grew up during the next century.

[2] (1) *In the Prefecture of Gaul* lie (*a*) Diocese of Britain; (*b*) Diocese of [Northern] Gaul, which includes the whole course of the Loire, and the valley of the Saône from Lyons upwards; (*c*) Diocese of Vienne, including France south and west of Loire; (*d*) Diocese of Spain, including the westernmost of the African provinces. (2) *In the Prefecture of Italy*, (*a*) Italy, Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica are

with the names of the hierarchy of officials who governed these prefectures, dioceses, provinces. If the Empire had been a simple bureaucracy before, it now became a very complicated one, and infinitely more costly to govern. So vast indeed was the new machine that it was beyond the power of one, or even of several Augusti and Cæsars to control; it 'took charge of itself,' and constantly thwarted reform lest its own interests should be endangered. The real point is that the military force maintained in each prefecture was rendered, either by Diocletian or by Constantine, entirely independent of the civil administration. This, in times of danger, is usually reckoned a good symptom; and, as the need of the Empire in the fourth century was defence of the frontiers before everything else, it seemed to have been introduced just at the right time; but, in the result, it did not work well. Constantine, or his predecessor Galerius at the same time abolished the dangerous Prætorian guards, whose camp on the Esquiline dated from Tiberius, and who had so often murdered emperors and sold the throne. This of itself meant a loss of influence to the city of Rome. At the same time Diocletian or Constantine introduced a radical change into the composition of the army, by the creation of a huge central reserve, quartered in the interior of the Empire, to be moved quickly to any frontier which was

included in one Diocese of Italy, together with Rhætia Prima (roughly our Switzerland) and Rhætia Secunda (Bavaria between the Danube and the Swiss frontier); (*b*) Diocese of Africa, extending from Mauritania Cæsariensis to the Gulf of Sidra. (3) *The Prefecture of Illyricum*, whose northern frontier is the Danube from Belgrade to Sistova, includes (*a*) Diocese of Dacia, roughly equivalent to our Servia and Montenegro, but extending slightly more east and south; (*b*) Diocese of Macedonia, including modern Macedonia, Albania, Thessaly, Greece, and Crete; (*c*) Diocese of Illyricum (Eastern Tyrol, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia, and a strip of Western Hungary). (4) *Prefecture of the East*, which includes all the rest of the Empire in five Dioceses, Egypt, 'the East,' Pontus, Asia, and (in Europe only the Diocese of) Thrace, made up of Bulgaria, Eastern Roumelia to Constantinople, and that part of modern Roumania which lies south of the Danube. There were some subsequent changes of these groups.

most threatened. These troops were called 'Comitatenses,' as opposed to the 'Limitanei' or frontier legions, which were from this time onwards more and more depleted. Besides these the emperors created a special bodyguard called 'Palatini,' with extremely high pay, and these were largely increased, to the prejudice of the rest of the army, all through the fourth century. The 'Limitanei,' with lower pay and lesser prospects, remained cantoned along the vast frontiers. These they soon proved too few to defend, although an attempt was made in the fourth century to give them a personal interest in the defence, by grants of land just within the frontier to retired veterans, whose children then had a hereditary obligation to serve with the eagles. For recruiting was very difficult to keep up, and a fourth-century legion was seldom at anything like its 'paper strength,' in spite of the fact that barbarians were readily admitted, both into the actual ranks and as auxiliaries, in such numbers that in the fifth century the army was more barbarian than Roman.[1]

But Diocletian had gone even further towards separation of the constituent parts of the Empire. In his anxiety to provide for future successions to the throne without bloodshed, he had imagined a strange plan by which there were to be two 'Augusti,' one in the East and the other in the West, and that each of these was to 'associate' with himself a destined successor called a 'Cæsar,' who should step into his place at his death. It is easy to see that the eternal severance between East and West really lay at the bottom of this plan. The scheme did not work, and only led to a civil war, in which there were at one time six Richmonds in the field; but its main point was revived again in the partition of 395, when the sons of Theodosius took, one the East and one the West to govern. Finally, Diocletian had fixed the

[1] The name *legion* clung to the smaller units (each one-third of the original 6000 men) which were the rule from the end of the third century; the reason for the breaking up of the old unit into three was that the frontiers now needed a much more extensive cordon of troops.

centre of his own administration so far as it had any centre at all[1] at Nicomedia, while his fellow 'Augustus' had ruled from Milan.

Many explanations have been sought for this desertion of the old capital, such as the growing poverty of Italy in contrast with the comparative prosperity of the East, the enormous distance of Rome from the very vulnerable point of the lower Danube, or the need of driving back the hereditary foe of Greece, the Persian, against whom, indeed, Diocletian directed a brilliant and successful campaign. But perhaps we need not go further than the condition of the Roman mob, which four centuries of State Socialism and pampering had now rendered absolutely intolerable. To feed and amuse this million of unemployed and unemployable, now that the corn-area of Africa was contracting and wild beasts were becoming scarce,[2] had become too loathsome a task; let the *Præfectus Urbi* look to it; if the mob starved it could not easily take vengeance on an emperor who lived in Asia or Gaul. No emperor after this time made any serious sojourn in Rome.

Grass did not at once grow in the streets of the capital of the world, which still covered some nine square miles of ground, but moral grass grew in the hearts of its senate. The members of this body were no longer in danger of losing their heads at each imperial election, as in the third century, but they lost all remnants of their virility. They continued indeed to elect, on the nomination of the emperor, two persons every year to fill the oldest of Roman magistracies, the Consulate; and the *Consules ordinarii* continued to give their names to the year. Our own historian Bede, writing in the eighth century and being wishful to limit for his readers the exact date of the Saxon invasion of Britain in the fifth, tells us that it

[1] *Ubi Cæsar ibi Roma* was Diocletian's maxim.

[2] 'For Heaven's sake get me some crocodiles,' writes a fourth-century Prefect of Rome; the crocodiles came, but were in such poor condition that they had all to be killed on the first day of the Games, and gave no sport at all.

was 'in the third Consulate of Aëtius.'[1] The emperor often deigned to be consul and to give his name to the year. The consuls were still inaugurated with all the old ceremonies of fasces, lictors and curule chairs, after which they were able, in the immortal phrase of Gibbon, 'to enjoy during the remainder of the year the undisturbed contemplation of their own greatness.'[2] One is indeed constrained almost to admire the placid attitude of the Roman senate during all the changes of the fourth and fifth centuries. To the very last it contained the names of some men worthy to be remembered as gentlemen and as rhetoricians; 'rich men furnished with ability living peaceably in their habitations,'[3] a sort of mixture of the French Academy and a fashionable London Club.

[1] Also, a third consulship was under the Empire a surprising honour for any citizen; Aëtius' is the only known instance.

[2] A sixth-century writer, Jordanes, tells us that 'to be called Consul was the *summum bonum*, the first glory in the world.'

[3] If they did not 'find out musical tunes' they certainly 'recited verses in writing'; this seems, indeed, to have been the chief occupation of a fourth- or fifth-century senator. *Cf.* Ecclesiasticus xliv. 5, 6.

WESTERN EUROPE
300 A.D.
With few exceptions only those places mentioned in the text are named on the map.
English Miles
Lugdunum Batavorum
Trajectum
Colonia Agrippina
Cortracum
Tornacum
Atuatuca
Aduatuca
Juliomagus
Augusta Treverorum
Augusta Vindelicorum
Castra Regina
Juvavia
Lugdunum
Augusta Praetoria
Mediolanum
Verona
Aquileia
Forum Julii
Arelate
Massilia
Narbo
Tolosa
Burdigala
Augustodunum
Andematunnum
Argentoratum
Mogontiacum
Augusta Nemetum
Sirmium
Salona
Ancona
Ravenna
Arretium
Perusia
Spoletium
Ariminum
Pisaurum
Placentia
Parma
Mutina
Bononia
Aurelianum
Juliomagus
Limonum
Caesaraugusta
Tarraco
Barcino
Pompelo
Carthaginensis
Belgica
Germania
Aquitania
Lugdunensis
Narbonensis
Pannonia
Dalmatia
Italia

ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER II

The TIME covered is the latter part of the third, the whole of the fourth, and the first years of the fifth centuries.

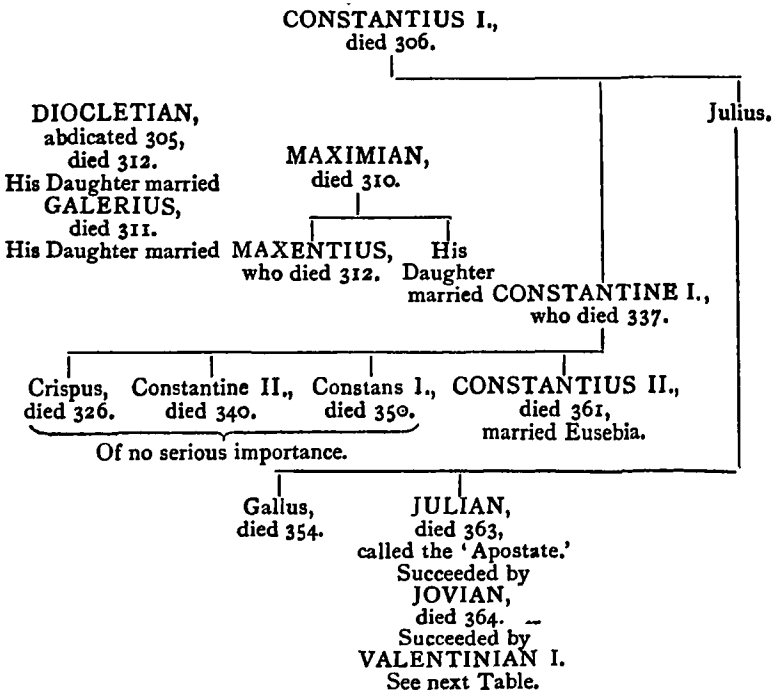
The principal SUBJECTS are—(1) The beginning of the 'barbarian' invasions of the Roman Empire, especially in the West, *i.e.*, the coming of the Goths, Burgundians, Sueves, Alans, Vandals, and other tribes; an attempt is made to show that they did not come to destroy civilisation but to get a share in it; also, that the Empire needed them both as colonists and soldiers. (2) A description of the frontiers of the Empire; its condition in the third century; the reforming emperors from Aurelian to Constantine I. (3) The civil war of 306-324, with the triumph of Constantine; what Christian influences were at work; the Edict of Toleration of 313; the triumph of the Church. (4) The Arian controversy and the Council of Nicæa, 325. (5) The career of Athanasius under Constantine and his successors; the essential differences between the Eastern and Western theologies and churches. (6) The successors of Constantine, especially the career of Julian, called the 'Apostate'; his overthrow, and the accession of the dynasty of Valentinian; the last days of paganism at Rome; the conservatism of the senate; the career of Theodosius I., last emperor of united East and West. (7) The real grievances of the Goths from 378-410; their sack of Rome under Alaric, 410. (8) The division of the sovereignty on the death of Theodosius, 395; the reign of Honorius and the settlement of the Visigoths in Southern Gaul.

The chief ACTORS are:—

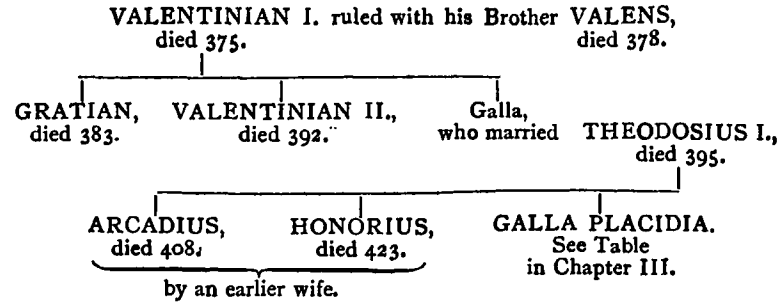
(1) The family of Constantine.

CONSTANTIUS I.,
died 306.

Continued on next page



(2) The family of Valentinian.



CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH VICTORIOUS AND THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS

> Apparent dirae facies inimicaque Troiae
> Numina Magna Deum.

MANY people who know no German are familiar with the word *Völkerwanderung*, and imagine that the Roman Empire was overturned by the mere impact of a vast mass of tribes, all of Teutonic descent, moving westwards and southwards from the borders of Central Asia. That about the beginning of our era such a movement of tribes was going on, is pretty evident. The causes of it we can hardly guess. Ancient Germany was probably not unlike Greece in Homeric times; force was vested not in any king or state, but in the heads of great families, or in successful leaders of war bands. The one fact in its history of which we can be sure is that many little groups gradually coalesced into several big ones. All had doubtless some traditions of the past, but of two only, the Goths and the Lombards, were the traditions ever put in writing, and that not until the sixth and eighth centuries respectively. Of one other whole branch of the Teutonic race, the Scandinavian, the entire tradition and mythology survives; but this was a branch which had no contact with Rome at any period of its history. It is so strange as to seem to us almost impossible, but one old Teutonic tradition, even now widely held by ethnologists, makes the Scandinavian peninsula the original home of the entire Teutonic stock, and it is true that few countries

have yielded such 'finds' of primitive weapons as Southern Sweden. But, whence so ever the migration started, we suppose that the rise of strong kingship, some rapid increase of population, pressure of still more barbarous Asiatic savages behind them, above all hunger, may have been the causes that led the several 'barbarian' stocks to hammer on the Roman frontiers. If they often raided within its borders as enemies, they oftener came as suppliants for food and shelter or to offer their services as auxiliaries (*fœderati*). Certainly they had no ambition to found new states. Almost to the close of the fourth century the Empire could repel them—unless indeed it wanted them. In pitched battles, even in the fifth century, when they had almost all adopted the defensive armour of the Romans, they were by no means always successful against Roman discipline and strategy.

But long before that time Rome actually wanted them very badly. Some means of arresting the decline of population, of getting the tax-owing lands cultivated, of filling the imperial armies, had to be found. And so, by deliberate policy, whole provinces were peopled with foreigners, whole tribes were enrolled as *fœderati*. It was in the cavalry that there was the greatest demand for them; in this arm the Roman forces had always been least strong, and it was by this arm that the barbarians were destined to possess Rome. Every emperor from Constantine to Honorius enlisted fresh and fresh contingents of Teutonic cavalry. When Theodosius the Great had deliberately inaugurated the principle of setting up one great commander (*magister utriusque militiæ*) to have all power in the West and to stand as the emperor's right hand there, and two[1] in the East, we find that, with the possible exception of Aëtius, all such commanders in the West were of barbarian or semi-barbarian descent. Yet all clung passionately to the name and style of Romans; self-seeking and disloyal to a particular emperor a Goth who had taken his pay might be; but to the Empire,

[1] In the East there was a *magister peditum* and a *magister equitum*.

to 'Romania,' and to all that stood for civilisation he was always loyal. We have no evidence — perhaps because they did not write memoirs — that the 'Goths' despised the unwarlike Romans and Greeks, but much evidence that they were themselves despised by these, and put up with it meekly. In short they did all they could do to debarbarise themselves and become Romans.

There are exceptions to this general rule as to the mutual attitudes of Romania and Barbaria. Once (in 416) there was in Italy such an enthusiasm for Goths that an emperor had to forbid Romans from dressing themselves and wearing their hair after the Gothic mode; but this was probably only a temporary movement of whirligig Fashion. On the other hand, far away in the North-West there were sea-wolves, our own Saxon ancestors, who did not care a jot for the Majesty of Rome, did not want to be civilised, and simply went on slaying. And there was one terrible savage from Central Asia, Attila, King of the Huns, who would perhaps have destroyed every trace of European civilisation if Romania and Barbaria had not combined against him.[1] With these exceptions Goths, Sueves, Gepids, Herules, Burgundians, even Vandals, even non-Aryan Alans, even heathen Franks, seem mainly to have wished for a share in the riches and prosperity of Romania, and to become Roman gentlemen.

Of course they failed of this last wish. The traditional Goth, both of history and fiction, was

'rough and tough and extremely gruff.'

His manners were bad, his voice loud, his dress inadequate, his appetite more than adequate. Like Alan Breck, he was no doubt 'a bonny fighter,' and given to outbursts of fury, in which he would go, bare sark,[2] at anyone or anything. The Gaul of Julius Cæsar's days had been

[1] It is true that Attila employed as secretaries men who knew Latin; possibly even he might have been 'converted' to Romania.

[2] The etymology of 'Berserker' is doubtful; the N.E.D. prefers 'bear sark' 'in a bear's coat.'

much the same, but three centuries of the *Pax Romana* had tamed him and everyone else whom it had overshadowed. All experience — and, after all, men and empires are justified in relying on experience—led Rome to think that she could tame any barbarian. She forgot that, in the fourth century she was old, shrunken, half-starved, and almost childless.

But the point I wish to make is this, that, whereas down to the close of the third century Rome had repelled far vaster barbarian *invasions*, slaughtering these same tribes in such numbers as, when stated even by educated Roman historians, sound to us quite incredible, she welcomed in the fourth century the barbarian *penetration* and Romanised its elements; and yet those elements did not give her enough strength to resist the new and probably smaller invasions of the fifth. The last statement must, however, be taken as referring principally to the West; in the East she did on the whole successfully drive back the Northern invaders with her left hand, while with her right she kept at bay the far more hostile Persians. When at last in the West the barbarians stepped in and carved the Roman provinces into kingdoms, they did so almost regretfully, and only because, in the beautiful words of Dr Hodgkin, 'the last leaf had fluttered down from the withered tree' of Ancient Rome.

When we come to look at the invasions in more detail, we shall find that it is difficult to separate them from what I have called the 'penetrations' or from the other events of the history of the Empire, even from events which have, apparently, so little connection with barbarian invasions as theological disputes. The first thing to realise is that the frontiers of the Empire had never been long free from war, and that from the third century onward such war was almost incessant. The system of legions massed at several great stations on a frontier defended, between the stations, either by great walls with watch towers or by very small pickets of troops, was bound to prove a failure if all the frontiers were assailed at once, a casualty that actually happened in the third quarter of the third century. The

three most critical points are the Euphrates, the Danube, and the Rhine; and with the last of these we must group that south-western corner of Germany, protected by the long defensive works of Trajan and Hadrian which, roughly speaking, stretched in a hollow curve from Coblentz to Regensburg.[1] 'Alamans' and other Germans are for ever hammering at this barrier, as 'Franks' are at the Belgic provinces of Gaul on the Lower Rhine. After the abandonment of Aliso in Westphalia (the modern Paderborn) by Tiberius, the outposts are Castra Vetera (nearly opposite the modern Wesel), Moguntiacum (Mainz) and Castra Regina or Regensburg; which are fed from their several bases of supply at Augusta Trevirorum on the Moselle (which we know as Trier) and Augusta Vindelicorum or Augsburg. Further eastwards, Rome has to defend Trajan's great conquest of Dacia-beyond-the-Danube[2] *i.e.*, much of our Hungary and Roumania, till it is wisely given up by Aurelian; after which comes the turn of the provinces of Noricum, Pannonia, Mœsia, and of Dacia Ripensis. The outposts of these will run right along the Danube from Vindobona (Vienna) and Aquincum (Pesth) to Mursa at the mouth of the Drave, and Singidunum (Belgrade), Viminacium (at the confluence of Morava and Danube), Ratiaria (Widin), Œscus (at the confluence of Isker and Danube), Novae (near the modern Sistova), and Durostorum (which is now Silistria); and the feeding bases will be Sirmium on the river Save, a now vanished city, and Naissus, at present Nisch on the Morava, through which places runs the great road from North Italy to the East. In these regions it is the Goths whom we fear most. Lastly, there is the Euphrates; for, although Mesopotamia and even districts beyond the Tigris were more than once, and once for sixty consecutive years (297-363), in Roman hands, and

[1] See notes *supra*, p. 27, and *infra*, p. 49.

[2] Dacia was probably always a mistake; Hadrian had wished to surrender it. To be at all secure, its eastern limits should have extended to the river Don. Marcus Aurelius had to defend it, and in consequence the whole Empire, against the worst storm since the Punic wars.

though Armenia inclined more to Rome than to Persia, the outlying fortresses were for ever in danger and especially after the advent to power in Persia of the Sassanid dynasty early in the third century; these last were more warlike, more Oriental, less civilised than their predecessors the Arsacids. Zeugma on the Euphrates is the critical crossing-place; Nisibis in Mesopotamia is our great outlying Roman stronghold, and Antioch the best basis for our eastward-marching armies.

Then again we must realise that this bad third century was the age in which emperors were made and unmade by the dozen in the camps of the frontier-legions. Such men were often obliged for their own safety to lead their legions to Italy, either to kill the reigning emperor or to coerce the senate; the frontier would thus be left bare and your Goth, your Alaman or your Persian would soon be across it. On the whole one is surprised to find what valiant fellows most of these shortlived soldiers' emperors are, and how gallantly they carry on the losing battle. Maximin (235), though himself of Thracian descent, fights fiercely to guard the frontier against worse barbarians. Decius, whose pedigree is doubtful, has an evil reputation as a persecutor of Christians, but he is an antique Roman to the core, and falls in battle against the Goths in Dacia (251). The brave Valerian flies to the succour of Nisibis, is captured by the Persians at Edessa, and never heard of again (260). Meanwhile the Gothic horsemen are looming ever larger and larger; the left wing of their great moving nation contrives to ship itself across the Black Sea,[1] and sweeps the northern coasts of Asia from Trebizond to Chalcedon; nay, crosses the Bosphorus to ravage Thrace, and holds out a hand to the right wing of the same nation which pours over the Danube from Dacia; perhaps it is from some of the captives which they carry back with them

[1] There were outlying Greek cities nearly all round the shores of the Black Sea, which the Roman fleet tried, with very indifferent success, to defend from pirates and 'Scythians'; and it was probably from some of these cities that the Gothic invaders now 'borrowed' the means of transport.

that these Goths, first of barbarians, learn some rudiments of Christianity. The year 268 may be taken as the worst that Rome as a civilised power had seen since the creation of the Principate, and it is probable that the Balkan peninsula and the northern provinces of Asia Minor never recovered their prosperity after these inroads.

But the turn of the tide was coming with the series of great emperors, Claudius II., Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian. These begin the restoration of discipline in the legions and exploit their valour. The Goths are driven in headlong flight northwards again, and Dacia, beyond the great river, is abandoned to them. Noricum and Pannonia are delivered from the Alamans who had actually penetrated the Alps into Italy. Egypt and Syria are torn afresh from the hands of a remarkable warrior and Hellenist Queen, who had set up for herself at Palmyra; a rebellion in Gaul, which has been smouldering for over a decade, is suppressed before Aurelian, the strongest emperor since Trajan, is murdered in 275. Two ominous signs of the future are however seen in his reign; he ascribes his victories not to Vesta of the Roman hearth, but to the Eastern 'God of the Sun'; and he builds walls for Rome. Other cities have to follow the example of the capital, for ἄνδρες οὐ τείχη πόλις is becoming an exploded proverb.[1] But Probus took up the work of Aurelian, refortified the Rhine,[2] planted colonies of veterans along it, with a regular 'feudal' obligation on their lands to supply horse and foot to the legions; pacified the Franks on the Lower Rhine, and planted some of them in Gaul and Britain; planted other barbarian colonists in Thrace, and took 16,000 *fœderati* into Roman pay. The predecessors of the

[1] Frontier cities were of course always walled; but, during the first two centuries, the only walled city within the interior limits of the *Pax Romana* was Rhodes.

[2] The *Limes* or frontier of the first or second century had been a regular series of fortifications, in stone or earth work, with a military road running behind it. In the third century much of this was decayed, and Aurelian and Probus seem to have drawn back the frontier to the great rivers, with an occasional *tête-de-pont* beyond them.

Dervishes of our own day were driven back into their Soudan; the Isaurian mountaineers received severe lessons in the highlands of Asia Minor. Probus, moreover, was the last emperor who seriously set himself to conciliate the senate, and to leave civilian appointments largely in its hands.

Diocletian, in the intervals of carrying out the reforms to which I referred in my earlier chapter, has always this frontier task on hand. Not much personal fighting in the first line can be with certainty ascribed to him, but his activity in organising defence can be traced everywhere. From his vantage points at Sirmium and Nicomedia, he will watch his 'fellow-Augustus,' Maximian, his 'associated Cæsars,' the savage Galerius in the East, and the highly cultivated Constantius in the West, doing their duty sternly. It is Galerius who pushes the Persians back behind the Tigris, perhaps even further than Trajan did, thus making the last 'expansion' of the Roman Empire; and it is Diocletian who, for the last time replaces a vassal king of Arsacid descent upon the throne of Armenia, to be a thorn, for a century to come, in the side of the Persian. Meanwhile, in the far North-West, Constantius has to deal with a strange phenomenon, no less than a Roman admiral, Carausius, who has turned pirate or been playing into the hands of Saxon pirates on the shores of Britain and Gaul. He has lasted for a decade, with his chief arsenal at Boulogne, but is finally murdered in Britain, and Constantius re-establishes the *Pax* in the Channel.

It may have been Diocletian who, in 303, began the last and very savage persecution of the Christians; these had enjoyed nearly half a century of peace, and grown with such amazing rapidity that they were now a power in every army, and a power to be reckoned with in the State. But, as 305 was the year of Diocletian's abdication, and as the persecution lasted off and on till 312, it should perhaps be more truly ascribed to Galerius. Constantius, in his sphere of government, simply omitted to put the edicts in force; he was a monotheist at least,

even if he was not under Christian influences. With the abdication, however, of the great Diocletian, who retired to the Dalmatian coast, to grow cabbages and build his marvellous palace of Spalato, by Salona, civil war was at hand, and the death of Constantius brought it to a head, 306.

Dimly enough we shall be able to resolve this civil war, first into a duel between two Cæsars for the West and a duel of other two Cæsars for the East (but always with a tendency to spread itself into what an Irishman would perhaps call a 'duel of four'), and then into a duel between the East and the West.

Young Constantine, the son of Constantius, had been at the Eastern court, and had seen with horror some bloody scenes of persecution; perhaps he had spoken his mind against them, for, when Galerius got full power in the East about 305, he had fled to his father's army in Gaul and was in North Britain when that father died. The British legions at once hailed him as Augustus, and Galerius was forced to recognise him. He fought valiantly against the Franks on the Lower Rhine, drove them back with great slaughter, and then turned his eye southwards. The tangled set of quarrels that goes on for the next few years is hardly to be expressed in intelligible sentences. Cæsars and Augusti spring from the ground like mushrooms and are knocked down as quickly. Maximian twice abdicates and twice resumes his claims to the Western half of the Empire; he is threatened, not only by Constantine, whom at first he hopes to conciliate, and to whom he gives his daughter to wife, but by his own son, Maxentius, who grabs at Africa, grabs at Italy, at Rome. In the East, on the death of Galerius in 311, two fresh pretenders to the title of Augustus, Licinius and Maximin, start up and fight, each for his own hand; from them we may cheerfully avert our eyes. In 310 Constantine is obliged to dispose of his father-in-law, Maximian, who is officially held to have 'committed suicide,' and must then deal with Maxentius.

It is Gaul *versus* Italy, an antagonism which we shall meet more than once in the next two centuries; but it is

Gaul more loyal to Roman ideas than Rome itself. Gaul is always the eldest and most loyal child of the Roman Empire. In 312 Constantine is over the Alps with a small but splendid force of Gallic legions disciplined in the late struggle on the Rhine, and probably penetrated with Christian influences. Maxentius, based on Rome and claiming without much justice to be the candidate of the senate, though probably not an active persecutor of the Christians, was in much larger force, but allowed his generals to be defeated at least twice while he remained inactive at his base. If we may believe the first historian of the Christian Church, Bishop Eusebius of Cæsarea, some time before the armies met, Constantine saw a vision of the Cross in the sky, and dreamed a dream that if he put the Cross upon his standards *In hoc signo vinces*.[1] Constantine, in his old age, told this story to the good bishop and confirmed it with an oath. Eusebius apparently knew nothing of it when he wrote his *Church History* in the emperor's lifetime, and it first appears in his *Life of Constantine* written in 338.

Was the emperor indeed a convert? It is a question of supreme interest; we know that he was a monotheist; we know also that, though no far-seeing sage, he was an enthusiast, who believed in direct divine help of some sort. His pagan friends believed in it too, and said that it was his deified father Constantius who came to succour him in the struggle. The only subsequent pagan emperor, Julian, also believed in direct divine help, and threw away a great Roman army in the belief. That Constantine for twenty-four years after his victory ruled practically in the Christian interest is also clear, but whether he was ever baptised is another question. Eusebius clearly states that he was—upon his deathbed; but the full story of his baptism by St Sylvester is not found earlier than the sixth century. There is no great reason to doubt that he presented to the Bishop of Rome for a residence his wife's palace, called 'the Lateran,' or that he built

[1] Τούτῳ νίκα: so in Euseb., *Vit. Con.*, I. 28; *not* 'Εν τούτῳ, as usually quoted.

the two first public Christian churches in Rome, the Basilica of the Lateran and that of St Peter on the Vatican Hill. Constantine's enemies used to say that as Christian bishops would absolve a man from any crime, the emperor had turned Christian in order to get absolved from his political murders. However this may be, it seems clear that, in 312, the Cross was the best, perhaps the only flag for a monotheist. Under it a brilliant victory was won over Maxentius' enormous host, at the Milvian bridge, two miles from Rome, and Maxentius was slain in the battle. Rome made no defence, for it was weary of Maxentius who had proved himself a gory tyrant; Constantine, though he scrupled not to clear rivals from his own path, was essentially not a man of blood, and he was well received by the senate. He came at once to an understanding with Licinius, the abler of the Eastern rivals, and, in the joint names of Constantine and Licinius, was put forth in 313 the Edict of Milan, not under any specially Christian influences but at the wish of the 'party of all reasonable men.' It gave the Christians complete toleration and religious equality. That Maximin would oppose them was certain, and that Licinius, when he had beaten Maximin, as he did soon after, would quarrel with Constantine was more than probable and came to pass.

But Constantine was the first soldier of the age, and each successive victory confirmed his belief in the favour of the Divine Christ. By 326, after much toil and fighting, he was master of an united Empire of East and West, and had put to death his own son Crispus, who was supposed to be plotting against him. He did not neglect his frontiers, and we find him once aiding against the Goths on the lower Danube certain 'Sarmatians,' of whom he planted colonies in Thrace. But the important work of his later years was the definite creation of a new capital on the Bosphorus, the best point from which the Empire could be cared for as a whole. For this purpose he chose the old Greek city of Byzantium, long one of the most flourishing commercial stations of the Ancient World. It stands on a narrow peninsula, defended on three sides by

deep waters, and is the natural stepping-stone from Europe to Asia and back again. Here were no traditions and privileges like those of Rome, for which the new spirit of 'Sultanism' needed to have any regard; from 'Constantinople,' as the new capital was renamed, the Empire could be regarded as a whole. And here we can see how essentially Constantine's aim was the same as that of the Christians, namely, to reform the old narrow 'Romanism' for the benefit of the world at large. Rome, however, never forgave him, and the last great poet of Rome, Claudian, speaks in bitter words the hatred of the old for the new city[1] and, as far as he dares, of the old gods for the new. The steady paganism of the majority of Roman senators may well be ascribed to *spretæ injuria Romæ.*

We may be sure, however, that Constantine was an emperor even more than he was a Christian; he did not lay down the title of Pontifex Maximus, which all his predecessors had held; he defrayed, as they had defrayed, from his own purse the cost of all the religious ceremonies of old Rome: and, if he closed some of the more scandalous of the shrines of Venus, he probably did so in obedience to the public opinion of their districts. He seems to have made an excellent patron of Church councils, and perhaps all the better from the fact that, though a man of high culture, he was no theologian. The Church victorious was far from being united in itself and, but for the unity of the Empire, might easily have broken up into as many sects as there were afterwards nations within that Empire's boundaries. In the very year of the Edict of Milan, Constantine was appealed to on the question, then raging in Africa, 'Can a man who has blenched in the late persecution be absolved?' He appointed a small commission of bishops to give him advice, but it was as Lord of the World that he spoke the sense of this commission and his own in favour of mercy. In the next year a council of Gallican bishops at Arles confirmed this judgment, and

[1] 'Et Byzantinos proceres Graiosque Quirites,' etc. (in *Eutropium*, ii., 135).

also declared that Christianity was not incompatible with military service.

These were questions most interesting to the practical mind of the West, but, immediately after the final victory over Licinius, the emperor had to solve a question which had arisen in the more speculative East. The Great Council of Nicæa, which has given its name to a whole age of Church history and to one of our three creeds, met in 325 to 'determine the true nature of God.' The theological difficulty, which was to 'divide the whole of Christendom by an iota,' arose at Alexandria in 321 with the excommunication of the popular preacher Arius. The doctrine of the Trinity as it now appears in the three creeds had long been a belief of the Church, but it had hardly yet been authoritatively defined. The whole of the coming difference between the spirit of the Latin and Greek churches was foreshadowed in the fact that this was an Eastern and not a Western question. The Western peoples were far more ready than the Eastern to accept marvels, mysteries, and unintelligible doctrine, but they were content that these should remain unintelligible. The Easterns ever sought to find a philosophic basis for them, and to put into earthly formulas those spiritual truths which are incapable of being bound by formulas at all.

Clearly the spirit of the Church had been for accepting a perfect unity of the Father and the Son. Arius, the father of Arianism, did not in actual words deny the divinity of the Son; but what he said was that, whereas the Father was from all eternity and had no beginning, the Son had had a beginning; once He 'was not.' Hence He was, as later Arians said, ὁμοιούσιος[1] (of like nature

[1] The word was unknown to Arius himself, and is first found about the year 357; but as it is then classed among words which are not to be used, it must have been in use before that date. The late William Bright in his *History of the Church from* 313 *to* 451 well points out that one of the main attractions of Arianism lay in the fact that its assertion of an inferior Godhead would come home to persons in transition from Polytheism to Christianity.

or essence) rather than ὁμοούσιος (of one nature) with the Father. This doctrine had already spread widely in the East before the Council of Nicæa met; to the West it was as yet almost unknown. Of the bishops present at the council, 318 in number, most belonged to the eastern half of the Empire, and there were a few even from beyond its frontiers, *e.g.*, from Persia and Arabia. Constantine addressed the Assembly in official Latin, and then fell back upon Greek, the tongue most familiar to his audience. The real prompter of the bishops who were hostile to Arius was a young deacon called Athanasius, and some heat was displayed. In the end a formula was found, to which all but two of those present were able to subscribe, and it was distinctly an Athanasian formula, 'the Son is of one essence with the Father.' All who held otherwise were formally anathematised. All the glory of the decision fell to the great Soldier-Emperor, who, as yet unbaptised and perhaps never baptised, had, without being in the least a partisan, striven for peace and unity within the Church.

He won thereby for himself twelve years of comparative peace, and for the Roman Empire, long after it had become nothing but a name or a symbol, an alliance with the Catholic Church of untold value. The theological storm did not at once subside. Even into the formula of Nicæa some restless bishops began to read an Arian significance, or, perhaps for the sake of peace, to explain away their own previous words against that formula. Against these the Athanasians had the strong ground of holding fast to the formula itself, and were quite ready to anathematise all who would not accept the most rigid definition of the undefinable. In such an age, in such a crisis of Church history, and among such a people, opinions must have been constantly liable to changes, and we should, I think, hesitate before accepting the received Catholic story that all the Arians or *quasi* Arians were necessarily rogues, who sought only for power and high place in the Church.

Athanasius, for his part, refused to communicate with

bishops who would not accept his own rigid interpretation of the Nicæan doctrine, and when he was elected Bishop of Alexandria in 326, his stubbornness displayed itself even in the teeth of successive Church councils. One of these in 335 went the length of deposing him from his bishopric, and the perplexed emperor exiled him to Trier for eighteen fateful months. I say fateful, because Roman Gaul, where was all the best and most intelligent life of the West, surrendered itself wholly to him, and never thereafter wavered in its attachment to Catholicism. If France is the eldest child of the Roman Empire, she is also the eldest child of the Catholic Church. But this exile left the subtle Arius a free hand in the East, where his friends were rapidly winning over the court and Church to his side when he died in the year before Constantine.

And in 337 that emperor died also, full of days, riches and honour, and Constantius, his son, proceeded to murder most of his relations. I will not weary my readers with the bloody tale. The murderer was, nevertheless, awake to his imperial duties, and faced Persians on the Euphrates and insurgents in the West with steady tenacity, though with by no means steady success. An usurper Magnentius, with Frank and Saxon *fœderati*, was annihilated by Roman discipline in Pannonia, and in the Alps (351, 353), and Constantius was soon left sole ruler of the world. In this capacity he once, but once only, paid a visit to old Rome, a visit, alas, too much like that of a half-foreign overlord to a provincial town full of interesting antiquities. But even Constantius, though he began the rooting out of paganism everywhere else, did not dare to disturb the old pagan rites of Rome. On the secular side then, the life-work of Constantine the Great suffered little in the hands of his ruthless son, but on the ecclesiastical side all was not so well.

Athanasius returned in triumph to Alexandria, with the conscience of Gaul in his pocket, and took up an attitude of lofty superiority towards the court and Church of Constantinople, which had the effect of making Constantius lean strongly to the Arian side. Fierce riots

at Alexandria compelled Athanasius again to fly to Italy, where he captured the conscience of Christian Rome, as he had captured that of Gaul; it was upon this occasion that he took with him two unwashed monks from the Egyptian desert, at whom cleanly senators stared with some wonder. It would be difficult to say that there had been any time, since the fall of Jerusalem, at which great deference had not been paid by all Christians to the opinions of the Roman Church, and, from the opening of the third century at least, the letters of its bishops carried greater weight than those of any other. But, if we are to seek a definite period from which some sort of actual primacy among bishops was acknowledged to belong to him of Rome, we shall date it best from the hour when Christian Rome began to give her unwavering support to Athanasius and his doctrine.

In the fourth century a considerable section of the Eastern Church was Arian, or Semi-Arian, and they were Arian missionaries who converted most of the barbarian tribes; a circumstance of grave moment for the future history of the Empire, for, while racial antipathies counted for comparatively little, the theological hatred of the Gauls, Italians and Spaniards of Roman descent and Athanasian creed, for the Arian Goths, Lombards, Vandals and the like, was to make any blending of the old and new races very difficult. The court of Constantinople remained more or less Arian longer than any serious section of the Church, in fact, till 378; and it was to the Church of the East, rather than to its court, that the Church of Rome now began to address herself seriously. It was Rome that demanded a fresh general council, which met in 343 at Sardica to settle the question. The Arians seem to have behaved very badly; in fact their representatives sulked and declined to attend the conferences unless the Athanasians should be excluded. Finally, they seceded and left the field clear for their opponents, who at once anathematised them and ordered all excluded Athanasians to be restored to their Sees. The most interesting result of the council was, however, that nearly all the bishops present

agreed to admit the See of Rome to be a general tribunal of reference for bishops. The rapidly approaching triumph of the Church over the State is seen in the utter powerlessness of Constantius against Athanasius, who declared almost open war on him. The emperor could indeed drive the bishop to flee from Alexandria[1] to the desert and its monks, but when he overawed small majorities at councils in Gaul and Italy into confirming his action, the greatest Western bishops withstood him to his face. At Sirmium he appeared for a moment to have better success (357), and a council agreed to some sort of mediatory formula; but Athanasius was never less defeated. In the desert he had found the true churchmen after his own heart, men who lay in lairs of wild beasts, men who had not washed for thirty years. Bishops and even councils might be coerced or might yield to the blandishments of secular men; but these monks knew that to refuse all obedience to the State was the real mark of sanctity. It is difficult for anyone out of sympathy with dogmatic definitions to acquit Athanasius himself of something of this spirit, something of that 'be thou therefore anathema,' which was to inspire Hildebrand, Becket, and all successful Roman churchmen; but it is impossible to refuse to him high praise for the gallantry with which he fought the battle and taught the faith to which all later generations have rightly given the name of 'Catholic.' He did indeed bear the brunt of the strife; he was *Athanasius contra mundum*, and *Athanasius pro ecclesia*.

If Constantius was an Arian, he made up for it by a thorough repression of paganism; though he refused to destroy the fabric of temples, he closed them to worship, and forbade sacrifices and auguries under the penalty of death. Yet at this very time a certain rally of paganism was taking place, not indeed at Rome, where alone the emperor had not dared to disturb it, but at Athens and even Alexandria itself. The Neo-Platonists, mentioned in my first chapter, began to see that the strength of their Christian opponents lay in the possession of a doctrine

[1] Five successive exiles are counted in the history of Athanasius.

and a Church; they began, therefore, to formulate doctrines for themselves, to establish ascetic priesthoods, and to invent mysteries. Quite unexpectedly they found an ally in the last scion of the house of Constantine.

Constantius was childless, and, if one could speak of an 'heir' to the Roman Empire, an idea quite foreign to the old notions of the principate, such an heir could only be found in his nephew Julian. Why Julian had not been put to death in his childhood is not clear, for his uncle was always very jealous of him. Perhaps the Empress Eusebia protected him; anyhow he was sent away to govern Gaul, where, with no previous soldier's training, he won a great victory over a German host near Strassburg (357), and endeared himself to the soldiers. His tutors had soaked him from infancy in Homer, and he knew the Iliad and Odyssey by heart; then, at the University of Athens, he passed under the influence of the Neo-Platonists, from whom he imbibed a kind of vague pantheism—'The Soul is to seek reunion with the Spirit of the universe.' His life was singularly pure and virtuous, and he always refused to attend the degrading representations in the theatres. He was obliged to profess, for his safety's sake, an outward belief in Christianity. But over the pearly pink and cream of the Parthenon still gleamed the statue of Athene Promachos, and the goddess seemed to speak to this young and ardent Hellenist. Soon he turned also to Mithras and the Sun God, and, while probably continuing to hold to a monotheist 'First Cause of all,' he found room in his Pantheon for all the old gods of Greece and for some new ones. Moreover, these gradually became real gods to him, each a representative of some principle of wisdom or valour; Christianity, he thought, was enfeebling the world by undervaluing the old military ἀρετή, which had been so dear to the elder gods.

His Gaulish legions, after his victory at Strassburg, did after their kind and wished to proclaim him Augustus; but for nearly three years he refused to be a rebel, until, in 360, his uncle, under pretext of a Persian war, demanded that he should send all his best troops to the East. Then

at Trier Julian revolted, and, though he opened negotiations with Constantius, he made them impossible by openly proclaiming his belief in paganism. With what feelings his own army, of which the vast mass must have been at least nominally Christian, received this announcement, we do not know. As he moved eastwards towards Illyricum he reopened the pagan temples, and was well received everywhere; but one can hardly doubt what would have been the result of a conflict between the young and the old emperors, the old and the young faiths, if Constantius had not died suddenly in 361. At the end of that year Julian reached Constantinople and was acclaimed sole Augustus. He showed himself merciful and fairly tolerant, recalled Athanasius from his exile, received with civil contempt deputations of Athanasians and of Arians, and, by promising full toleration to both, angered each sect far more than if he had persecuted it. He reopened the temples of the old gods, and declared that he would punish all riots against their services. Finally, with all the malice of a modern radical, he forbade Christians to teach in the schools.

You would have expected that old Rome would have risen and lifted this champion to the skies. She did nothing of the sort. Hers was a passive and historic attachment to a singularly unexciting ritual. Julian wished to set on foot an active propaganda of quite un-Roman complexion—orders of ascetic priests, deep mysteries of Oriental origin, even heathen monasteries of a kind. There was in him a vein of real fanaticism as well as a vein of extreme simplicity; like our own James II., he would promote to honour any hypocrite who professed himself to be a convert. To the placid conservatism of old Rome all this was nothing but a supreme bore, to be paralleled only too closely with the nasty black monks and the shrieking anathemas of Church councils. What the East thought of it all we have little means of knowing, for it was all over so soon. Julian had at once to prepare for a great fight with Persia, and, while getting his army together, spent his nights at Antioch in close and ascetic communion with his gods. He foresaw no limits to what

these grateful gods would do for him; to say that he expected to be a new and more successful Alexander, is to put it mildly. The long silent East should vibrate to the lost chord of Hellenism, and so, as Napoleon took scientific men to Egypt, Julian's army was accompanied by tribes of Greek philosophers and Roman *haruspices*, who may perhaps have smiled when they met each other on the banks of the Tigris, as they were believed to smile when they met on the Capitoline Hill.

They had soon little else to smile at. The King of Armenia, the old ally of Rome, said drily that, for his part, he was a Christian, and had no mind to aid the spread of Hellenism. Julian thoroughly mismanaged his campaign by pressing on too far and too fast. Yet he displayed also the most dauntless valour, and fell in fight while guarding the rear of his starving army as it marched up the great river after a vain attempt to bring the Persian hosts to a pitched battle (363). The disaster was a terrible one for Rome; the line of the great Constantine was at an end, and Jovian, who was chosen, not so much as emperor but as pilot, to lead the remnant home, had to submit to any terms that Persia demanded. These terms were the abandonment of all Diocletian's conquests, the surrender of the Roman protectorate of Armenia, and the Euphrates for frontier. Jovian died before home was reached, and Valentinian, a brave soldier of lowly origin, was elected emperor by all the officials of the East, civil and military, at Nicæa.

We must now shift the scene to Europe for many years to come, and we shall soon see that all the European provinces are in a bad way. We shall see the new dynasty—for Valentinian's family ruled or provided rulers connected with it by marriage, for both East and West, for well nigh a century — making valiant head against the incoming barbarians, but playing an ever more and more losing game; the Empire is never again quite what it had been under Constantine and Constantius. But we shall watch with interest the praiseworthy efforts even of weak rulers to keep close the connection between the West and East

which rightly seems to them the best plank of safety. We shall watch also the steady march of Roman Christianity at the expense both of dying paganism and Eastern heresies, not only in the West but at Constantinople also; and, alas, side by side with this, the steady increase of puerile superstitions, sanctioned and applauded by the greatest names in Church history.

Valentinian, fully accepting the principle that a division of duties must be made, chose his own brother Valens to be his fellow-Augustus in the East, and his little son Gratian to be his successor in the West. Laws must run in the name of both Augusti, or they will be invalid. He resided much at Trier, but, if he had a capital, it was Milan, a station from which the Rhine and Upper Danube frontiers could be watched at the same time. His whole reign was practically spent in frontier warfare. In a lonely valley of the Odenwald beyond the Upper Rhine you may still see a giant pillar and a giant block of syenite marble lying on the ground; tradition believes them to have been the materials of some monument of Roman greatness, which Valentinian's soldiers,[1] perhaps surprised and cut off at their work, left behind them. All the territory beyond the Rhine and Upper Danube had long been lost, and was now swarming with barbarians; the frontier of the rivers themselves was in the gravest peril. The Alamans raided as far as Paris before they got a lesson from the Roman arms at Châlons; the great general Theodosius had to give another lesson to the Picts who had clambered over the Roman Wall of Britain. It was on the frontier of the middle Danube that Valentinian died in 375.

Valens on his (lower Danube) frontier had been much less successful; he seems to have thoroughly mismanaged the Goths, who were becoming the question of the hour. For nearly a century they had kept peace, being no doubt well satisfied with their new province of Dacia. But they

[1] Mommsen, nowever, says that the last emperor of whom any memorial has been found beyond the Rhine is Gallienus (*Provinces*, i., 165).

were now beginning to feel pressure from behind from the savage Huns, who perhaps had been chased back from the Chinese frontier and looked like overrunning all Eastern Europe. The Goths had been friendly to Julian, and had sent troops to aid him against Persia; but these troops were inclined to kick against Valens, who seems to have detained them in the Balkan peninsula against their will. Their leaders beyond the Danube demanded their release, and Valens thrice sent troops against them without much success. On the other hand, there was a strong party of Goths who desired peace with Rome; and this we must presume to have been the Christianised (though Arian) section of the nation. In 373 the Eastern wing of the said nation was decisively beaten by the Huns, and smelted into that great Hunnic Confederation of which we shall hear more half a century later; while a large band of the Western or 'Visigoths,' in terror of the same fate, seems in 376 to have been seeking for a refuge within the boundaries of the Empire.

A good bargain might have been made; the Empire wanted warlike colonists and auxiliary cavalry; the Goths wanted food, safety and land. Valens undoubtedly consented to his officials making some such bargain, and an enormous band of Visigoths with wives and children crossed the Danube; but on the Roman side at least the bargain was never honestly fulfilled. Food was not supplied, and the mere lack of this led the newcomers on to riots, to plunder, and at last to open war, which raged for two years (376-8) all over Thrace; and the tamer Goths called in the wilder. Young Gratian at Milan had an Alaman war on his hands, and could not come in time to help. Valens was at Antioch with his eyes towards the Euphrates; but he collected the whole force of Eastern Rome, moved rapidly back to defend his capital, met the Goths, now a regular fighting army, at Adrianople, and died in battle against them. Forty thousand Roman legionaries are said to have fallen with Valens; and the fight may indeed be called the last one of the old Roman army. It was essentially a victory of cavalry over infantry, of the lance

and the long sword over the *pilum* and the short sword, of impact over cohesion. The victorious Goths entirely failed to take Adrianople or any other great city; but for the second time within fifteen years the prestige of the Empire had suffered a fearful fall, and a new Augustus had to be provided for the East.

Gratian's brother, Valentinian II., though proclaimed Augustus on the death of his father, was too young to rule, and the Court of Milan, therefore, in concert with the officials at Constantinople, chose Theodosius, of Roman-Spanish birth, whose father of the same name had lately distinguished himself on the Roman Wall of Britain, to rule in the East. Division of administration and of frontier-duty, not division of sovereignty, is the key to all these dualities of rule; and it is not always easy to see where the line of demarcation between the spheres of duty of Milan and Constantinople actually ran. It is a point of some importance, for after all 'Europe' is a geographical expression; the 'Europe' of which men thought in the fourth century is by no means the same as that of the twentieth. Supposing that the Roman Empire, as ruled from Constantinople, had maintained Asia Minor against the Mahomedans down to our own days and had kept the Slavonic nations at bay on the Danube, we should perhaps now reckon Asia Minor part of Europe and Russia part of Asia. But in the centuries to come the Eastern half of the Empire did neither of these things, and therefore, say in the tenth century, one might very easily reckon the whole of the Balkan peninsula to 'Asia.' In the fourth-century partitions, this same Balkan peninsula was always divided somewhere; Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Lower Mœsia, and 'Scythia' were always reckoned in the Eastern sphere, as Pannonia and Dalmatia were always in the Western; but there were provinces (in modern Servia, etc.) which were reckoned now to one, now to the other sphere; such were Upper Mœsia and Dardania.

It is a great misfortune for us that at the death of Valens we lose the last trustworthy Roman historian, Ammianus Marcellinus. A Greek of the fifth century

called Zosimus takes us on a little further, but he is a singularly prejudiced person, who hates both Christians and barbarians, and can see nothing good in either of them; and even he deserts us on the eve of the Gothic sack of Rome. There are tantalising fragments like those of Olympiodorus and Priscus and the Ravenna Chronicle known as the 'Anonymus Valesii,' but they fail just when one needs them most. As for the churchmen, we have a great many lives of saints—the *Life of St Martin* by Sulpicius Severus was the text-book of the Latin West in the fifth century; we have Orosius' *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*, but he is hardly to be quoted as an authority, for he wrote at the desire of St Augustine about 417 to prove the truth of Christianity by the judgments of God; we have the Latin Chronicle of St Jerome, which is largely a translation of Eusebius and ends at 378; and we have continuators of the same which just connect it with the *Liber Pontificalis;* this last began to be written early in the sixth century, and continued almost without a break to give some sort of a life of each pope down to the third decade of the fifteenth.[1] But to all the early chroniclers of ecclesiastical matters, the discovery of the relics of some obscure martyr, or the definition of some iota of doctrine mean much more than the nation-making which was going on in the West. We gather, however, that Theodosius, and not the feeble sons of Valentinian I., became at once the protagonist when he took the purple in 379; he may be reckoned into the dynasty because he married into it. He took Constantine for his model, but he went far beyond him in filling his Eastern legions with Goths, Franks, Vandals and every species of barbarian whom he could attract. This indeed

[1] M. Duchesne concludes for the commencement of the *Liber Pontificalis* in the middle or end of the reign of Theodoric; the author then wrote 'lives' for the earlier popes, of whom perhaps up to that time only lists and dates existed, and it pleased him to attribute his work to Pope Damasus who had died in 384. Subsequent continuators were generally almost contemporaries; there is a bad break at end of ninth century; the text of the early part was much altered and interpolated in later ages.

was the only thing he could do, for the old Roman army of the East had perished at Adrianople, and the day of cavalry was coming. Horse-archers must have been introduced about this time, and lancers to combat the cavalrymen of the barbarians. Theodosius was thus able to pacify the Goths, for whose families he also strove hard to find lands for colonisation; but the result was that the army ceased to be really Roman at all. Yet with this army we shall see that he was able to stand forth as the champion of Rome against a far more truly Roman army, that of Gaul and Britain. The reason of this paradox lies in the rising preponderance of the Church and of churchmen.

The first Valentinian's opinions on the Trinity were orthodox; he maintained, however, in the West a strict toleration towards both parties and even towards the pagans during his eleven years of rule. Valens clung to the Arianism of Constantius. But the Arians in their bitterness spoiled their own cause; they began to start a different formula, that of ἑτεροούσιος—'the Son is of a different nature from the Father'—and this would really have meant a duality of the Supreme Being. Both the learning of the East and the unlearning of the West rose against this; the East by the mouths of Basil 'the Great' and Gregory of Nazianzus, and the West by the mouth of Aurelius Ambrosius, whom we know as Saint Ambrose of Milan, a man of the purest Roman patrician descent, who had been a great civil administrator before he became a bishop. This united movement of orthodoxy was accompanied, as usual, by a fresh cry for the independence of the bishops from lay jurisdiction which, also as usual, was voiced by the bishops of Rome. Gratian and his colleague Valentinian II. were at the mercy of the bishops, and Theodosius prudently decided to throw in his lot on the same side; thus for the first time there was a perfectly orthodox, perfectly clerically-minded emperor on each throne. In 380 edicts were put forward in the name of both emperors, fully accepting the tradition that St Peter was the founder of the Roman Church, and that all deviation from the doctrine taught by the Pope

(Damasus) was to be punished.[1] In 381 the Second 'General' Council, that of Constantinople, though it consisted wholly of bishops from the Eastern half of the Empire, fully admitted the primacy[2] of the Bishop of Rome, but gave him of Constantinople the next place 'because Constantinople is new Rome.' This council it was that all but settled the text of the Nicene Creed as we now have it in the West, one clause alone, the *filioque* clause, being added by a Spanish Synod of Toledo in 589. How Theodosius got over the penal clauses of his edict with regard to his barbarian soldiers, who clung stupidly to their Arianism, does not appear.

One result might have been easily foreseen; it was the death knell of the empty conservative paganism of old Rome. If it is not certain that Gratian refused to be hailed as Pontifex Maximus, it is certain that he withdrew the royal subscription which alone defrayed the cost of the old rites. The Atrium of the Vestals was closed, the statuette of Victory finally removed from the Senate House. One wonders how long it was before lamps and garlands were hung at the street corners before little statues of saints and virgins, as they had been used to hang before the images of the Compital Lares at the same spots.

What made this desecration harder to bear was that the young emperor's chief councillor and general was one Merobaudes, a Frank; and against this, if not against his contempt for Roman traditions, Gratian's Western subjects

[1] This edict of 28th February 380, dated from Thessalonica, seems to me of the highest importance; it makes the civil arm into the tool of the ecclesiastical, almost into its executioner; and its wording was probably not forgotten by later popes. See for its text *Codex Theodosianus*, xv., 1.

[2] By primacy we must not, I think, understand anything more than an honorary headship; no jurisdiction is implied. The claim of the Roman churchmen that such jurisdiction was conferred at this time on their bishop rests on an alleged reply of Gratian to a petition of the Roman Bishop to the effect that the See of Rome was to be the ultimate tribunal of appeal for all bishops. This rescript of Gratian is given in *Migne Patrologia Latina*, xiii., 583, but the authority there quoted for it is weak.

began to protest. The British legions were the first to move and chose their general Maximus as Cæsar; Gaul followed suit with tumultuous welcome, and when the rebel began to advance towards Italy, Gratian's own troops forsook and murdered him (383). Now Maximus appears to have been, or professed to be, as orthodox a Christian as Theodosius,[1] and, as his army certainly was a much more Roman one than that of the East, one would have expected Italy, so far as she had any will left, to welcome Maximus; Theodosius in fact evidently expected it, for he temporised and recognised the rule of Maximus in Gaul and Britain for four years, very much to the disgust of young Valentinian II., who held Italy and Africa and claimed all the West. But the Italian bishops to a man supported Theodosius, and this finally turned the scale in his favour. When in 387 Maximus moved towards Italy, Valentinian fled to Theodosius, who met the army of Maximus on the Save, defeated him utterly in the next year at Aquileia and put him to death. Again cavalry had beaten infantry, the barbarian had beaten the Roman legionary.

One last piteous appeal the senate of Rome put forth to Valentinian when he returned to Milan, for the restoration of their little 'Victory'; it was all they asked, and it was Rome, widowed of her *princeps* as of her gods, who asked it. But Ambrose stood by the boy's side and, in the teeth of all his Privy Council, sternly said 'no.' Shortly afterwards the young emperor was murdered in Dauphiné, probably with the connivance of one Arbogast, a Frankish soldier who had been gradually getting all the military power at his court. If Arbogast ever thought of making himself emperor, he soon thought better of it, and chose a Roman Senator Eugenius to be his puppet. The Roman senate seems to have applauded, for, if not a heathen reaction, it was decidedly an 'anti-clerical' move. Yet it looks as if the sympathies of most Christian and most Catholic Gaul were enlisted

[1] And indeed did some persecution of heretics, on his own account, against which it is pleasing to see that the aged Saint Martin, apostle of Gaul, protested.

on the same side, and perhaps many of the former friends of Maximus were in the game. Theodosius was again obliged to temporise for two years before he was ready to strike; when he struck he struck home, yet it was only after a very severe battle at the north-eastern gate of Italy that Arbogast and Eugenius were overthrown and destroyed on the river Frigidus beside Aquileia (394).

Theodosius had proved himself victor over many things other and older than these usurpers. Without active persecution but with civil contempt, he put down for ever the last vestiges of heathen rites, and almost the last traces of senatorial independence. From that time onwards persecuting edicts of the fiercest kind both against paganism and heresy stain the pages of the Roman Statute Book. It remained for the next Emperor Honorius to confiscate all the remaining property of the temples in the shape of lands and endowments (408). On one of the visits of Theodosius to Milan a scene took place which is graven for ever on the world's memory. He had ordered or allowed a large massacre of citizens at Thessalonica, in revenge for a riot directed against a most righteous act of imperial justice. St Ambrose showed the truly noble side of the power of the Church when he forbade Theodosius to enter Milan Cathedral until he had done penance for this most un-Christian and un-Roman act of vengeance; and Theodosius, with equal nobility, bowed to the true voice of the Christian Church.[1] In the next year (395) he died, leaving behind him the reputation of a great soldier and a devoted eldest son of the Catholic Church.

This date of 395 has been taken by some historians as marking the real epoch which divides the Ancient from the Mediæval World. I see no special reason for this; the triumph of the Church over the State was assured rather at the accession than at the death of Theodosius; his army was as full of barbarians (who indeed got drunk, quarrelled, and fought at his table to the disgust of the polite Roman

[1] The exact date of this incident is a matter of dispute; it may very well have been before his victory over Eugenius.

and Greek officials) as those of his two sons, while the civil administration remained for at least a century in the hands of Roman and Greek officials. Indeed the only real change in 395 is that it was marked by the first clear case of hereditary succession; the official magistracy of the principate has given place to the territorial sovereignty of a family. Arcadius, the elder son, takes the East, Honorius the younger takes the West, and each treats his dominion as a property not an office. One cannot exactly say that the West liked the idea, for Gaul, though she was slow to move, hated, as ever, the barbarians in the army who supported the arrangement; and Africa actually rebelled, but was quickly put down. On the other hand Rome, by the mouth of Claudian, hailed Honorius and his Romanised-barbarian general, Stilicho the Vandal, with great joy in the last poetry of the Ancient World. Little did Claudian realise that, to most of the inhabitants of the Empire, the 'Rome' whose glories he sang was soon to mean not Roma Dea, but the anathemas of a Christian bishop.

At the Eastern Court we may perhaps see a certain reaction against the Gothic influences of the late reign; at any rate, before the end of the century, the Gothic *fœderati* are profoundly discontented. Probably Arcadius failed to pay them their wages; certainly Bishop John Chrysostom said unpleasant things about their obstinate Arianism. There were other Goths who, ever since 379, had been promised land-settlements which they had not got. Perhaps the mere weakness of the two young emperors tempted them. Anyhow, we now hear of one Alaric 'the Balth,' who had fought for Theodosius against Eugenius, as moving about at the head of a large army of Visigoths on his own account (396); and this in Illyricum itself. It was, of course, flat rebellion, and was accompanied by a series of demands for a definite tract of territory to colonise, and a definite sum of money and supply of food until these lands could bear crops. 'If not'—the Goths would help themselves, and they appeared to be in force enough to do so. 'Barbaria' had thrown down the gauntlet to 'Romania,' this time within the Empire.

Arcadius had done simply nothing to stop them; whether he could have done much we have no means of knowing. Probably he even actually connived at the Goths moving into Hellas itself. Athene, indeed, saved her Athens from sack, but they ravaged Attica and the Peloponnese with some thoroughness. Probably it was only the experience of twenty years before that prevented them from attacking the great cities of the Balkan peninsula. Though their ravages were not a good way of drawing attention to their unquestionable wrongs, it is hard to see what else they could have done.

Now the one person on whom the West, if not also the East, would naturally call to stop Alaric was the Vandal Stilicho, whom Theodosius had created captain-general of all the forces of the West; these may well have been twice Alaric's numbers, though also largely barbarian. Whether or no Stilicho played into Alaric's hands, or intended to use him for his own ends is one of the problems of history, and annexed to it is the problem of Stilicho's own character. The logic of facts looks against him; but Claudian, a whole-hearted Roman imperialist, was his champion, and Claudian's verse rings true. Let us hear the facts. First in 395 and 396 Stilicho twice crossed the Adriatic, and succeeded in manœuvring Alaric out of Greece into Epirus, at the same time saying to Arcadius, 'let us give these Goths a good section of the Illyrian provinces and once more make them our allies.' Arcadius (or his ministers) was clearly jealous of Stilicho, and would not listen to this or to any of his proposals for pacifying the Goths,[1] though Arcadius was afterwards willing to treat with Alaric on his own account. Thereon in 401, Alaric, who had in the interval been raised on a shield and proclaimed 'King,' moved into Italy; Stilicho met him on the river Tanaro, at Pollentia (402), in a battle as indecisive as that of Sheriffmuir,

> For some say that we wan, and some say that they wan,
> And some say that nane wan at a', man.

[1] The matter is well discussed by Professor Bury in his edition of Gibbon, vol. iii., Appendix xiv.

Alaric was certainly allowed to escape with little loss, and Honorius, who now for safety moved his headquarters from Milan to Ravenna, became as jealous of Stilicho as Arcadius had always been. The idea began to take root that Stilicho had come, or intended to come to terms with Alaric, to the prejudice of both the Eastern and Western courts, and perhaps to put his own son on the throne of both; at the least, he seems really to have desired to separate the whole of Illyricum from the sphere of Constantinople. Alaric fell back again to the head of the Adriatic, and there he must be supposed to have spread his Goths at free quarters on the country for six years to come. Honorius visited Rome in 404, and celebrated a triumph[1] with the 'games,' the last games in Roman history. For a good Christian monk, Telemachus, rushed into the arena and endeavoured to separate the gladiators; he was killed, a martyr, if ever there was one, to a noble cause; and his death awakened the better conscience of the newer world. In the next year (405) a fresh horde of barbarians of various tribes under one Radagaisus poured over the Alps and penetrated as far as Tuscany, where Stilicho shut them up in a trap until they starved, surrendered, or melted away into the soil; this did not look like disloyalty on the part of Honorius' general.

Next, the legions of Britain, horrified at all this barbarian welter around the dearly honoured Metropolis, proclaimed a certain Constantine as Augustus; and the last of the legions crossed over from that unhappy island in order to make good their usurper's footing in Gaul. Gaul welcomed any anti-barbarian movement, as well she might, for at the end of 406 a vast host of Burgundians, Alamans, Franks, Sueves, Vandals and Alans poured across the Rhine and began to do after their kind. Some say that Stilicho prompted this invasion in order to throttle

[1] There had been no triumph since Diocletian's just a century before; Narses, after his final defeat of the Goths, celebrated a triumph in Rome in the middle of the sixth century, and I believe this was the last that Rome saw.

the usurper Constantine; if that were true he was indeed a traitor to 'Romania,' but, by the same test, he was loyal to Honorius, who dreaded Constantine much more than he dreaded the barbarians. Then Stilicho suggested that Alaric should go and fight Constantine on Honorius' behalf in Gaul; but that leader had by this time other ideas in his head.

In 408 died Arcadius, leaving an infant son Theodosius II., and about that same time the, perhaps groundless, perhaps justifiable fears of Honorius led him to get up a mutiny in Stilicho's army, which resulted in the murder of that general. This murder at once left Alaric 'in the air'; all hopes of getting his claims fairly considered were at an end, and he must look to himself. He talked, or is said to have talked of mystic voices and oracles leading him on—whither? To Ravenna and the Crown of the West? No barbarian ever dreamed of the latter, and the former behind its miles of marshes was almost as impregnable as Venice afterwards was among her lagoons. But Rome, even behind the walls of Aurelian, recently repaired with ominous care by Honorius, was perhaps not so impregnable, and every barbarian believed that the streets of Rome were paved with gold.

Yet we can see that Alaric hesitated long and made, as it were, every offer of peace before playing this terrible card: 'Give me and mine lands in Rhætia or in Illyricum or sufficient lands anywhere, and make me captain of your army as Stilicho was' is the text of all his offers to Honorius. He was refused again and again. In 408 he besieged Rome a first time, and, though he was quite powerless to take it, he nearly starved it out by occupying the line of the Tiber between Ostia and the City; the story goes that the barbarian slaves fled in numbers to his host. He seems to have retreated from this first siege only for a heavy ransom; in 409, after fresh rejections of his offers by Honorius, he thought of a new plan. He would create a puppet emperor, who would give the Goths both lands and office; and one was easily found in the Senator Attalus, late Prefect of the City, a gentle, cultured person,

possibly of pagan leanings. But, when the practical barbarian said, 'Right—now I will go to Africa[1] and overthrow Count Heraclian who keeps your granary, and then come back and establish your throne,' the Roman patriotism of Attalus refused to hear of such a thing; let Alaric rather have a serious try for Ravenna. Alaric unwillingly agreed, and, as he advanced northwards, Honorius was making all preparations for flying to Constantinople by sea when a good reinforcement of Eastern troops arrived at his port. Then Alaric threw over his puppet, and, after fresh vain offers to Honorius, turned southwards again to Rome. It must have been by treachery or from fear of utter starvation that his troops were admitted through the Salarian Gate on 24th August 410. For three days the Goths held the city, and, though we know that, from fear of what St Peter and St Paul might do to them, they protected the greater churches, they soon collected a great wealth of gold and silver, and freed a great number of Gothic slaves. More than that we do not know. The Christian writers are too much inclined to look upon the Goths as instruments of God against a half-pagan city for us to place much reliance on their stories of Gothic 'mercy.' Such archæological evidence as we have points the other way to a regular sack, accompanied, especially among the rich palaces on the Aventine Hill, with extensive burnings and, in all probability, with all the other regular horrors of conquered cities. At any rate after a few days Alaric was prudent enough to draw off his men for the absolutely necessary conquest of Africa. He intended to sail from Reggio, but died, we know not how, before he reached the port.

His mission seemed to have failed. His Visigoths were as landless and as foodless, though not quite as moneyless, as before. But—he had taken Rome. The twelve centuries, typified by the twelve Vultures which

[1] Africa was always dissatisfied and inclined to rebel since the early part of the fourth century; its Church was torn by a violent set of heretics called Donatists (extreme Puritans), who maintained an episcopate of their own in the teeth of the existing Catholic episcopate.

Romulus saw as he founded the city, were at an end:

And when Rome falls, the World.

Two contemporary writers, but only two seem to have realised the truth; Jerome in his cell at Bethlehem and Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in Africa. Oddly enough the former, although the comparison with Babylon and Sodom is not absent from his lamentations, seems to feel the loss to civilisation and history more than the latter. But it was the arrival of exiles flying before the Goths that induced St Augustine to begin writing of that City of God which is independent of centuries and walls, which trusts in no vultures, and fears no Goths. Augustine was a true Roman citizen, and died long afterwards urging from his death-bed the defence of a Roman city; Empire and Church had hitherto been inseparable in his imagination; but in the 'City of God' he says that the Empire is the child of Cain, the Church the child of Abel. The Church is beginning to separate her cause from that of 'Romania.' A far worse omen than Augustine's metaphors was that no one in Rome seems to have realised that anything particular had happened.

Meanwhile, in the infinitely more living limb, Gaul, events were moving fast. We must remember that Gaul had never yet been an united country. Between the northern and the southern provinces there had always been a well-marked division, and the two German provinces, now practically gone, had always been regarded mainly as outworks. It was Roman patriotism and Catholicism that now began to make all Roman Gauls feel themselves, not only one people but the most important of Western peoples. The usurper Constantine, while bravely making head for Rome against the fearful barbarian irruption of 406, prudently held out the hand to Honorius, who would have been wise to take it in friendship. But Honorius was before all things 'a family man,' and Constantine, who was trying to hold Spain as well, had caused some of Honorius' Spanish relatives to be put to death. No terms therefore could be made, and the ravag-

ing German tribes swept on over the Pyrenees into the only imperial European province yet untouched, and one of the richest in pastoral and mineral wealth. Sueves and Vandals ravaged in Gallicia, Vandals in Bœtica (Andalusia), Alans in Lusitania (Portugal). Apparently they could take no great cities, but over the open country they spread like locusts. Poor stupid Honorius seemed rather glad, for at least this spoiled the game of Constantine. And what would the late conquerors of Rome itself say to all this?

All the treasures of Aurea Roma are of no use to a man who cannot find food to buy with them; and it must have been mere starvation that caused the northward retreat of the Goths. They were led by Adolf, brother-in-law of Alaric, who, however, did not take the title of king. They carried with them, half as guest, half as hostage, Galla Placidia, the half-sister of Honorius, with whom, to the unspeakable anger of the 'Family Man,' Adolf proposed marriage as the price of a close alliance with the Court of Ravenna. Such a marriage might carry with it the prospect of succession to the Western throne, but we have no evidence that Adolf thought of this. In 412 the Goths passed on into Southern Gaul, just when Constantine had been overthrown by Honorius' general, Constantius, at Arles. There they begged again for food and lands to settle on; and the emperor, who would do anything to get back his sister, promised both. But Heraclian in Africa was now in full revolt from him and stopped the corn ships; there was no food to send. Thus we are brought to see the real state of desolation to which Western Europe has been now reduced: its fortunes and its future shape in nations are determined by the ruinous price of corn; it has become all but impossible to feed an army even in the hitherto unwasted countries of Gaul and Spain. Adolf had to do the best he could for himself by seizing the territory, and even the three great cities of Southern Gaul, Narbonne, Toulouse, and Bordeaux; by what means he took them we know not—oh, how dark it is getting! Already to the northward had come in a new tribe, the Burgundians, and

had seized upon lands on the middle Rhine. Adolf married Placidia, apparently with much goodwill on her part, passed on, still in quest of food, into Eastern Spain and was murdered at Barcelona, 415 or 416. Then the Goths chose Wallia as their king, and he sent the widow back to Ravenna, where her brother at once married her to his general Constantius.

With the settlement of the Visigoths in Southern Gaul we may, I think, claim to have reached at last the dividing line between the Old and the New worlds. The futile timid emperor, who cared more for the health of his tame fowls than for the sack of Rome, has left a mark upon history which nothing can efface. By mere rescript, perhaps by mere acquiescence without rescript, he became the Father of Nations. Whether the idea were his own, or his far abler sister's, or that of Constantius or of some statesman whose name is lost, perhaps indeed of some eunuch of the half-Eastern Court of Ravenna, Honorius perceived that the only thing now to be done was to accept the logic of facts, to commence the recognition of nationalities within the boundaries of the West, to pretend that it was all with the goodwill of Rome, and to reserve a nominal suzerainty over all for Rome:—"You terrible Goths, whom I have seen at such close quarters, may hold what you have grabbed; you may make your own laws and set up your own government: you may tax my provincials as you please: you will find them far better administrators of your revenues than your prodigal selves; if you fight among yourselves we shall not interfere. Only remember this: it is all by the grace of God and Honorius; the boundaries of the Roman Empire are still intact; you are all children of the Roman Empire. By the way we are sorry you are mostly Arians, but you must settle that matter with our bishops and your Catholic neighbours. And now I will go and feed my hens."

After this recognition of the Goths, that of other settlers was merely a question of time; a question of time also that the Goths would themselves occupy the best part of the Spanish Peninsula as they began to do some thirty

years later. All the new settlers would be only too glad to accept the situation, and would try to believe in its sincerity. For the moment Honorius confirmed to the Goths the possession of Aquitania Secunda and some more of Southern Gaul, including Bordeaux and Toulouse but not Narbonne.[1] It was not indeed their whole 'promised land,' for that was to be Spain, but it was clearly the door into that wonderful country. In the great days of Spanish history, Gothic descent, though it must have been hard to trace, was to be the proudest boast of a Spanish hidalgo ('son of someone'), and *sangre azul*, the blue blood of the fair-haired warriors from the North, was to pass into a proverb.

Having done these things Honorius died in 423, the champion, if words can make a man champion of anything, of an united Roman Empire of East and West. You may stand by his actual tomb and that of his sister in their mausoleum at Ravenna, a little low building, on the outside of common dull brick, on the inside glowing with all the marvels of mosaic, as fresh as when it was laid upon the walls:—

Magnarum rerum magna sepulchra vides.

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[1] What he actually ceded was Aquitania Secunda, the northern part of Gallia Narbonensis and a part of Novempopulana. Toulouse remained the Gothic capital for more than a century after the Gothic conquest of Spain.

ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER III

The TIME covered is roughly the fifth century.

The principal EVENTS described are—(1) The Vandal conquest of Africa in 429-439; the Vandal sack of Rome in 455. (2) The Hunnish invasion of the Empire from the East and the overthrow of the Huns in Gaul by Aëtius in 451. (3) The theological disputes arising in the East, known as the Monophysite controversy; the Church councils consequent thereupon; the pontificate of Leo I. (4) The reigns of the last puppet emperors in Italy ending with Romulus, deposed in 476; the dying down of all really imperial institutions in the West; the readiness of the 'barbarians' to accept such of these as survived. (5) The 'kingdom' of Odoacer in Italy, 476-490; its overthrow by the Ostrogoths under Theodoric; the peaceful reign of Theodoric in Italy till his death in 526; the unfortunate Arianism of the Goths; Theodoric's position among the other 'barbarian' kings in the West. (6) The coming of the Franks into Northern Gaul; Clovis and his catholicism. (7) The agitated reigns of Zeno and Anastasius at Constantinople.

The ACTORS in these events are very various and difficult to group; but we may make a Table:—

(1) Of the *Rulers of Italy* after the death of Honorius in 423.

GALLA PLACIDIA, half-sister of Honorius, married first to Adolf the Visigoth, then to CONSTANTIUS (who is sometimes reckoned as Constantius III.). She died 450. Their son is

All are called 'Roman Emperors.'

VALENTINIAN III., 425-455. There is an usurper,
JOHN, 423-425, and, later, an usurper,
PETRONIUS MAXIMUS, 455; then a series of puppets set up by the provinces or by the barbarian army leaders, namely:—
AVITUS, 455-456.
MAJORIAN, 457-461.
SEVERUS, 461-464.
ANTHEMIUS (after an interregnum), 467-472.
OLYBRIUS, 472.
GLYCERIUS, 473-474.
JULIUS, called 'Nepos,' 474-475.
ROMULUS, 475-476, deposed by
ODOACER, King or Patrician of Italy, 476-490, deposed by
THEODORIC, King of the Ostrogoths, King of Italy, 490-526.

(2) Of the *Rulers of Constantinople* (often wrongly called 'Emperors of the East').

ARCADIUS,
died 408.

THEODOSIUS II.,
died 450.
A Daughter,
EUDOXIA,
who married
VALENTINIAN III.
of the West.

Pulcheria,
who late in her life
married
MARCIAN.
He died 457,
and was succeeded by LEO I.,
died 474.
He left a Daughter,
who married
ZENO,
died 491,
succeeded by
ANASTASIUS I.,
died 518,
succeeded by
JUSTIN I.

(See Table to Chapter IV.)

(3) For the Franks, see Table to Chapter V.

(4) For the Ostrogoths, see Table to Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III

THE FATE OF ITALY; THE GOTHS TO THE FRONT

Hic tandem stetimus nobis ubi defuit Orbis.

IN Western Europe the Empire is henceforth but the shadow of a shade; and my readers may be spared details about those who wore its crown. Starvation is more and more to the front, and, for Italy at least, all seems to depend on keeping open the connection with Africa and with Constantinople. There is a momentary usurpation of a secretary called John, but it is soon over and Galla Placidia, for whom one gets to feel a good deal of affection, virtually rules Ravenna, in the name of her young son Valentinian III., till her death in 450, and, when she disappears, the end is very near. She clung tight to her best plank, the close family connection with the Court of Constantinople, where reigned Theodosius II., also under strong petticoat government, that of his mother Eudoxia and his sister Pulcheria. Placidia's favour is disputed by several generals, Felix who at first holds the command at Ravenna, young Aëtius who has been brought up among the Huns, and the Roman Count of Africa, Boniface. Felix trips up the heels of Boniface, and perhaps drives him into momentary disloyalty. The common story goes that Boniface called in the Vandals to Africa to spite Aëtius. Probably the Vandals needed little calling. We do not know where they landed in Africa, but, if they could cross at all, they are not likely to have merely crossed the Straits and so incurred the tedious land march

through Mauritania; perhaps they sailed straight to Cæsarea. Anyhow in 429 under their able King Genseric, they landed somewhere and pressed rapidly on towards the granary of Rome.

In thinking of the 'Africa' of that name at that day we must get rid of all ideas of the 'antres vast and deserts idle' of the present time, although it is perhaps startling to be told that it was 'an European Island,' inhabited by a race originally of kin to the Aryan Europeans. Roman Africa, *i.e.*, the provinces of Africa, Numidia and the two Eastern Mauritanias, was in fact, both racially and geographically, separated from the Dark Continent to the south of it by a great range of mountains and thence by the desert of the Sahara. Eastwards from the Carthaginian Peninsula came again a stretch of desert with only a few coast settlements until Cyrene was reached, which, with Egypt, more properly belonged to the sphere of 'Asia.' But Africa proper and Numidia, and especially that peninsula which juts out to meet Sicily, were then as rich and fertile as any part of Gaul; and they were neither Eastern nor Greek but Roman-African, almost 'nationalist.' They were the inheritance of conquered Carthage, and Rome held them more fiercely than she held any other province, lest Dido's dreadful threats should again become effective factors in history. The greatest of the 'Latin' Fathers of the Church, Augustine, and the fiercest of the early Christian logicians, Tertullian, were both Roman-Africans. All along the westward shore, to and beyond the Straits, Roman cities were dotted in the provinces of Mauritania. Tingis (Tangier), the capital of the westernmost of these, was always reckoned as an outpost of Spain rather than of Africa, and the whole of Mauritania Tingitana had gone, in Diocletian's new division of the Empire, into the diocese of Spain. It is interesting, in the light of the events of the eighth century of the Christian era, to learn that pirates from this region often plundered the rich province of Bœtica long before the birth of Christ, and necessitated Roman garrisons being kept on the Guadalquivir. The

southern frontier of Roman Africa, it is true, ended[1] in mountains, peopled as to-day by wild Berber and 'Moorish' tribes; and these now joined the Teutonic Vandals in the race for plunder. The Donatist heretics, who abounded in Africa and perhaps outnumbered the Catholics, even welcomed the invaders; they were suffering many things from the vigorous Catholicism of St Augustine, now Bishop of Hippo, the second city of the province.

It was a complete conquest, though Boniface, even if he had once been a traitor, fought most valiantly against the invaders; only three cities Cirta, Hippo and Carthage held out for a time, and the last of these fell in 439. Ravenna appears to have been powerless to help, and Aëtius has been much abused for counselling Placidia to accept the inevitable. But the truth is that Italy had no course but to make peace with the man who kept the keys of her corn-bin, and the Vandals were only too glad to agree to pay a rent of corn and oil for the lease of their new estate; thus a new child had been born to the Roman Empire. A particularly froward one, however; Genseric is the first barbarian king who is much more than a name to us, and he is one of the most unpleasant. He did not desire to learn the lessons of civilisation, and that is perhaps the reason why 'Vandalia' was such a short-lived child. But he was a clever savage, and he saw that the Western Mediterranean offered a splendid field for an accomplished pirate.[2] First of Southern barbarians the Vandals became a sea-power, and their fleets became the terror of the sea coasts until their overthrow by Constantinople in the sixth century.

[1] Perhaps more properly speaking there was no 'southern frontier.' Roman troops had, at one time or another, showed themselves at several oases south of the mountains, but their permanent outposts, Lambœsis, Theveste and Thamugadi, were on the northern side of the range.

[2] His situation at Carthage has, from this point of view, been very naturally compared with the situation of numerous other Corsair powers in later ages at Algiers and Tripolis.

But while this new terror threatened Europe from the South and developed every day, a still worse terror appeared in the North, a mighty cloud hanging for ten years over the Danube frontier, and then passing westwards to Gaul—the Huns. If Theodosius II. had reigned in Western Europe in the seventeenth century instead of at Constantinople in the fifth, he would have been the Jesuits' ideal king. He would pay any price for the shoulder-blade of a martyr, and may be said to have founded the trade in relics which is by no means dead to-day. His court, in which his terrible virgin sister Pulcheria bullied his wife Eudocia, was like a monastery dependent upon a rigid nunnery. It was he, who, at the instigation of his bishops, re-enacted in stringent terms Constantius's prohibition of marriage with a deceased wife's sister;[1] and he in whose name the 'Theodosian Code,' or collection of those laws which had been published since the days of Constantine, was issued. Perhaps the most remarkable example of the ecclesiastical spirit of his legislation is the title of his Code (ix., 16. 12), which banishes 'mathematicans' from the whole Empire unless they will burn their books in deference to Catholic scruple and promise never to practise their arts again. But Theodosius also inflicted a very creditable defeat on the Persians about 421, and after this the Eastern World was at comparative peace for nearly twenty years. What the Huns were doing during those years we can only guess; but there is some evidence that before 440 the dominion of their kings extended northwards to the Baltic; as to its Eastern limits we have nothing but conjecture to guide us. Bands of them had been willing to serve as Roman mercenaries, and had been so employed ever since the days of Stilicho. Aëtius had very largely relied upon them, and until the date we have now reached had been their warm friend. About 440 we begin to find their king, Attila, turning his attention to the frontier of

[1] *Codex Theod.*, iii., 12. 2. Possibly this was a piece of feminine spite of Pulcheria against her uncle Honorius, who had successively married two daughters of Stilicho.

the Roman Empire; and in 441-2 he raided the Balkan Peninsula far southwards, destroying many cities, and spreading such terror that the walls of Constantinople had to be strengthened. The Huns were no would-be settlers or colonists; they came only for plunder, rapine and murder; grass grew not where their horsehoofs had passed. The palace of their king was a rude wooden hut in 'Old' Dacia, perhaps somewhere on the river Maros; but it was a hut in the middle of a movable camp of perfect horsemen and archers. Into dependence on this camp their leaders had gradually smelted large fractions of those Teutonic tribes which they had vanquished or chased westwards before them. More than one such tribe had a civil war of its own going on: if there were a dispute *e.g.*, as to the chieftainship of the Franks, and one claimaint appealed to Rome for help, his rival was sure to appeal to Attila, who was thus able to pose as the rival of Rome for the suzerainty of the Teutonic tribes. Among his followers were sections of the Gepids, Sueves, Rugians, Burgundians and Franks, and, one regrets to observe, the whole family of the Eastern or 'Ostro-Goths.' Savage as he was Attila 'knew his world' and how to play upon its fears; he rejoiced when he was told that the churchmen spoke of him in whispers as anti-Christ; but he was quite willing to accept enormous bribes from Theodosius in the name of tribute. In a later age all sorts of traditions gathered about his name as the 'Scourge of God.' Theodosius' troops had indeed once beaten him back across the Danube, and had built a flotilla on that river to patrol it; it was perhaps this that in 450 induced him to turn his attention to Gaul. The worst feature in the situation was the close alliance which he made with Genseric the Vandal; if the Vandal invasion of Italy had actually come contemporaneously with Attila's westward march, one does not see how any Western civilisation could have been saved.

The death of Placidia in the West, and Theodosius in the East in the same year (450) brought on a crisis. According to the ordinary story a foolish princess

Honoria, daughter of the former, had got herself into trouble, had been shut up in the monastic Court of Constantinople, and now sent Attila a ring and bade him come to her deliverance.[1] The savage had no objection to adding to his stock of wives, if he could make a new one, an excuse for raiding the West. Thus Valentinian III. was somewhat surprised to receive from Attila a demand for Honoria's share of her 'inheritance.' In the East the new Emperor Marcian, a valiant soldier, at once withdrew the tribute which Theodosius had paid for many years to keep the Huns quiet. Attila joined a body of Alans who were settling in Gaul, and had just got themselves well beaten by the Visigothic King, Theodoric. Theodoric had no doubt been conquering more of South-eastern Gaul than the settlement of Honorius in 419 had warranted, and Aëtius had been frequently in arms against him; but Placidia had made little steady effort, and the far-sighted Aëtius soon came to see in the Visigoths, already the deadly foes of the Vandals, the best allies of Rome against the Huns; also, Northern Gaul was still Roman and sent all its forces to help Aëtius and Theodoric.

We find Attila in the summer of 451 besieging Orleans, which is almost the central point of Gaul, and Aëtius hurrying to Gaul to collect such troops as he could find for its deliverance. He was joined by the Visigoths and by large fractions of the Burgundians and of the Frankish infantry, armed perhaps already with the *francisca*, or battle axe, the smaller cousin of the old Danish weapon of our own history. At some place unknown—the best guess is Méry-sur-Seine near Troyes—they met the Huns in what is usually known as the Battle of Châlons. Attila seems to have been less actually beaten than stopped; but he was so badly stopped that it was one of the 'decisive battles of the world.' Gaul and the West were saved. The Huns rolled back through Pannonia and

[1] The story is mainly derived from the later historian of the Goths, Jordanes; but Priscus, a better authority, says that Attila did demand Honoria's hand.

across the Alps in 452; they ravaged all the fertile plains of Northern Italy, and wiped out its greatest city Aquileia, at the head of the Adriatic. It is possible, though not likely, that the islands at the mouth of the Brenta, which had already been colonised by the ancestors of the Venetians, received some of the fugitives from Aquileia. The old name 'Veneti' is found again as early as the sixth century. Either starvation, or fever, or bribery, or the fear of an East Roman army which might meet him in front turned Attila northwards again. But the legend ran that, when the Romans sent good Pope Leo on an embassy to the barbarian on the river Mincio, over the Pope's head the figures of St Peter and St Paul appeared in the sky, and that the awe of that vision saved Rome.

Attila died by some unknown death in 453, and his dominion crumbled at once; in a bloody battle on the Lower Danube, the Ostrogoths and the other Teutons, among whom we now hear of the Langobards or 'Lombards,' threw off the yoke of the Huns, who rolled back upon Russia and, as a nation, are heard of no more in history.[1] Marcian had sent help to these Teutons, and the result was that we find the Ostrogoths getting allotments of lands in Pannonia.

Before we contemplate the final disappearance of imperial authority in the West, we must take a moment to consider the theological process which had been going on since the settlement of the Trinitarian doctrine in 381. In the first place Augustine, an excellent Platonist though his Greek was shaky,[2] had been systematising a special theology for the Latin Church. It was a theology too high and pure for the incoming night of superstition to

[1] The Avars, who begin to appear on the Danube in the sixth century, were probably of kindred race to Attila's Huns. The Bulgarians, and other horrors who masquerade as civilised nations in the Balkan Peninsula to-day, may very well be of Hunnish descent. Hun auxiliaries are found in the Constantinopolitan army throughout the sixth century.

[2] Augustine knew more Platonism than he did Plato, perhaps some of it was Neo-Platonism. See H. O. Taylor, *The Mediæval Mind*, i., 55.

comprehend. Much of it was indeed drawn upon by the most learned of the later schoolmen, such as Aquinas; but most of it remained neglected, if unanathematised, until brought to life again by the Reformers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In it are few subtle speculations as to the ineffable nature of God, but all is concerned with the more practical question of the relation of man to God, with the fear of punishment, with the means of Grace and the hope of Glory. And far away in a hermit's cell at Bethlehem another 'Father of the Latin Church,' St Jerome, is elaborating, for Latins and Greeks alike, another set of rules of life which, he little foresees, will set the Augustinian theology in the shade for a thousand years to come. While Jerome, the first scholar of the age and the only one who knew Hebrew, is translating for the Catholic Church of Rome the Bible into the text which that Church still uses and which we call 'the Vulgate,' he is also preaching, to a world all too ready to listen, the practice of celibacy as the highest ideal. His writings will be the foundation stone of monastic life in the West a century later. That life, some form of which has been dear to the Eastern mind in all ages, from the days of Elijah to the fakirs of Modern India, was already immensely popular in the Egyptian desert. Christian Monasticism had not originally been either Greek or Latin, but Coptic, *i.e.*, native Egyptian, though it is just possible that a few Greek and Latin fugitives from the persecutions of 303-13 had joined it. It is to women and clergy, and especially to fugitives who may have lost their wealth in the wars, that Jerome preaches this disastrous ideal. He also preaches up the value of relics, of pilgrimages, of prayers to the saints; and one is sorry to observe that he is for persecuting the very sensible Greek bishops who object to such things. Jerome is perhaps the first person to apply the Old Testament denunciations of the Amalekites to his Christian brothers when they do not agree with him. Thus in him is already born the spirit of the mediæval papacy. Rome is already his great ally.

Meanwhile the East has fallen tooth and nail on another question as to the 'nature of God,' a question which, in one shape or another lasts at least down to the seventh century. Had Christ one nature or two natures, a Divine and a human? Was Mary the 'Mother of God,' or only of the Man-Christ? The fiery and vindictive Cyril of Alexandria said she was the Mother of both natures, and he captured Rome (which did not understand such questions nor even the Greek in which they were asked) merely because he had been the first to appeal to her in Latin. The sense of the East seems on the whole to have been the other way, in favour of Cyril's opponent Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople; and there were council upon council, anathema upon anathema. At the First Council, Ephesus (431), Cyril entirely dominated the situation, to the prejudice of the churches of Antioch and Constantinople; to the prejudice also of the authority of the gentle Emperor Theodosius, whom the fierce Alexandrian prelate and his fiercer monks from the Egyptian desert simply terrorised. Eighteen years later at the Second Council of Ephesus, known afterwards as the 'Latrocinium,' these bloodhounds threatened to tear their opponents limb from limb rather than that one iota of the doctrine which they believed to have been their beloved Cyril's (though of course they were far too ignorant to understand it), should perish; the unfortunate patriarch, Flavian, was so badly mauled at the Council that he died three days afterwards. Such in those days were the methods of establishing orthodoxy; old St Gregory of Nazianzus had remarked nearly seventy years before that he 'had never seen a Council of the Church end well.' To soberer Rome, now ruled by the great Pope (afterwards Saint) Leo I., such methods were distinctly displeasing. Leo would fain have held the next council in Italy, and established at one and the same time the Doctrine of Two Natures and the Primacy of his own See. But he had to be content with sending deputies to the Fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon in 451. This indeed established the Roman view on the Nature of Our Saviour, admitted fully a formal

precedence to Rome over all other churches, but declared the See of Constantinople to be second in rank and entirely independent of the Roman jurisdiction. The Monophysite (One Nature) heresy had a long life at the Eastern Court, and made the streets of more than one Greek city run with blood in after years.

And now for the sad fate of Italy. Valentinian III., perhaps in jealousy, murdered his one wise General Aëtius in 454, and was murdered in revenge in the next year; his widowed empress, Eudoxia, being compelled to marry a senator Petronius Maximus who usurped the throne of the West, called upon Genseric—so runs the tale. The truth is that to Italy, as to Africa twenty years before, Genseric needed little calling; ever since the defeat of Attila some stroke from Carthage was to be expected, and in 455 it came. Rome made no attempt at defence when a vast Vandal fleet entered the Tiber, and in 455 for fourteen days she was pillaged from the Capitol to the Pig Market (*Forum Suarium*), from the Vatican to the Suburra. The amount of bloodshed is again a disputed point; but droves of the noblest Romans of both sexes were carried off to slavery in Africa, and all the movable treasures of the city with them. The Vandals were very much worse barbarians than the Goths; if, as some would have us believe, Alaric's was only an 'occupation' of Rome, Genseric's was a thorough sack, in which even Church treasures were not spared, and after which, in spite of the traces which remain of real activity on the part of some senators, we may say that Rome only played at being Rome. As regards the outward appearance of the city, it was probably not the devastations of Goths and Vandals that made any great difference. *Quod non fecerunt Barbari fecerunt Barberini* (a great papal family of later ages); from Constantine's time, if not earlier, the plunder of ancient buildings, to get material for new ones, had been going on; and from the fourth century onwards the use of any new material had apparently stopped. *All* the early Christian churches were built from the material of older buildings, mostly

temples; for, with one or two exceptions,[1] it was not till the opening of the seventh century that such temples as were left standing were exorcised of demons and turned into churches—the Pantheon being the most notable; civil edifices may have been used as churches from a much earlier date. But in the Dark Ages any and every old material was used, even for the meanest purposes; walls have been found entirely composed of the fragments of marble statues!

In 455, the East either could not or would not send help to Italy; but Gaul, dear faithful Gaul, would try. She tried in union with the Visigoths, who were now slowly beginning to feel themselves one people with hers. Avitus a Gallo-Roman noble assumed the purple with their aid, was crowned at Arles, and somewhat grudgingly received in ruined empty Rome. Marcian from Constantinople approved, and the two of them prepared for revenge on Carthage. But then Rome in foolish pride resented an emperor who had come with the favour of the Goths of Gaul, and unfortunately for Avitus the Goths at that very time were pouring over into Spain (whence they expelled the Sueves) and could send him no material help. And the commander of such troops as were left in Italy was a sullen, faithless barbarian, Ricimer the Sueve, who was jealous of the Visigothic allies of Avitus. He refused to do the new emperor's bidding, fought and beat him at Piacenza, deposed him and made him a bishop! It was the last effort of Gaul for the cause of 'Romania'; from this time the great Gallo-Roman families began to hold aloof from Government; they enlisted their own retainers

[1] Gregorovius says that the Church of San Stefano Rotondo on the Cœlian hill was actually the first instance; it had been either the Temple of Faunus or of the Emperor Claudius, and was consecrated in 483; in 528 Pope Felix IV. also turned part of a temple into the Church of SS. Cosmas and Damianus. Imperial sanction was needed in each case, as the public buildings of Rome were imperial property. The worship of saints was growing apace, but each saint was worshipped mainly in his own locality; most of the dedications in early Christian Rome were to Roman citizens or other persons martyred in Rome.

and fortified their elegant villas into feudal castles; the feudal age had begun, and the *Pax Romana* was at an end. The imperial power was not 'disobeyed'; it was merely ignored. Social necessities were beginning to beat political institutions out of the field. It was brigands whom these men dreaded more than Gothic or Frankish armies. Yet it was long before such men could come to neighbourly terms with the barbarian kings, who, for their part, manifested no desire to ill-treat them. The 'rudeness' of the Goths, and their contempt for culture appalled the Roman gentlemen; one of the best points about the Ancient World had been that culture was a badge of rank; one of the worst points of the Mediæval World was that a gentleman was hardly a gentleman if he *could* read and write:

> Thanks to Saint Bothan son of mine,
> Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line.

But by 474 all Southern Gaul except Provence was already in the hands either of the Burgundians or of the Visigoths, who were also steadily getting the better, in Spain, of Sueves and of such Vandals as were left behind there. From this time onward the various barbarian kings of the West begin to address themselves to Constantinople rather than to Rome. For all still regard themselves only as lieutenants of an emperor. The image of the reigning emperor is put upon their coins, and they accept titles such as 'Patrician,' 'Magister Militum' or even 'Consul' from him. This attitude was worth to them the more or less willing obedience of the Roman subjects in their territories, and it explains the comparatively easy fusion of the new and old races, and the way in which the new monarchies were able to take over the administrative system and officials of the old Empire.

In Italy Ricimer went on playing the part of king-maker from 457 to 472; and, in proportion to the favour his puppets got from Constantinople, he had or had not a chance of maintaining them. Leo I., who succeeded

Marcian in 457 on the Eastern throne, was determined to keep a hand on the West also, and twice the West and the East in concert prepared fleets for revenge on Carthage; for Ricimer, whatever else he may have been, was the deadly foe of the Vandals. But one fleet was burned by the astute Genseric before it could leave the shores of Europe, and another was betrayed by the treachery or incompetence of a Greek admiral in the harbour of Carthage itself. Could East and West hold together any longer? The first of Ricimer's puppets, Majorian, was a real valiant Roman. of the old stamp, the last legislator as well as the last warrior of old Rome. One of his edicts shows us that the 'jerry-builder' was already at work quarrying the temples of the city; another forbids people to take monastic vows before the age of forty. But Majorian was too good for Ricimer who puffed him away; and the next three puppets, Severus, Anthemius and Olybrius need not detain us a moment, save for the fact that Ricimer had to besiege, take, and plunder Rome before he could put the last of them on the throne. Olybrius died in the year of his elevation (472), and Ricimer had predeceased him in the same year. The senate, which ever since the death of Galla Placidia had actually been gaining in power, although of course it was really helpless if a barbarian Magister Militum chose to browbeat it, nominated one Glycerius; but Leo's widow said 'no, take my nephew Julius,' hence called Julius Nepos; Julius beat Glycerius, and was beaten by one Orestes, who set up his fourteen-year-old son Romulus (475). One year later Ricimer's old army, a mass of Teutonic *fœderati*, 'Herules,' 'Rugians,' 'Scyrians,' anything you like—perhaps the dregs of Attila's *quondam* allies, perhaps mere soldiers of fortune, broke out into mutiny under a chief called Odoacer. They acclaimed this person at Pavia as their 'king,' and they demanded one-third of all the land of Italy to colonise for themselves. They killed Orestes, and then Odoacer took up the baby Romulus from his baby throne at Ravenna in his hairy barbarian arms, and set him gently on the floor; said

there was no imperial throne at Ravenna any longer, no outward or visible sign of Roman authority in the West. That there was still a 'Roman Empire' Odoacer did not deny, but its seat was at Constantinople, and thither Odoacer sent to the new Emperor Zeno to get confirmation of what he had done.

Zeno, besides being almost as great a barbarian as Odoacer (in fact he had been an Isaurian brigand turned soldier and favoured by Leo), was in no position to say no. He would have liked to help Julius, the candidate of the East, but he had troubles of his own on hand. So west of the Adriatic all was now over; only Odoacer had to avoid adding the words 'of Italy' to his title of 'King,' and called himself rather 'Patrician.'

The Fates who spin the threads of history have something better to do than to juggle with coincidences of names; but there is surely a smile to be spared for the terrible irony which gave to the last two Roman rulers of the West the names of Julius and Romulus.

The deposition of Romulus at Ravenna in the year 476 can neither be dismissed as wholy unimportant, nor on the other hand can it be taken as the beginning of Mediæval as opposed to Ancient history. I gave a reason at the end of my last chapter for preferring for this purpose the date of 419, when Honorius acknowledged the foundation of a nationality within the bounds of the Empire. And the 'Severance of the West' from the authority of the Roman Emperor at Constantinople must be placed a great deal later than 476, although we shall find it difficult to assign any very definite date. The best thing I can do is to trace the fortunes of the several Children of the Empire as simply and briefly as possible, in the hope that my readers and I shall be able to agree upon some date in a later century for the final cutting of the apron strings. It is, however, a story difficult to tell without some breaches of continuity, for from this time forward if the Mother—the Empire whose seat is on the Bosphorus—has a continuous and connected history, her Western children have several continuous and by no means well-connected histories. In

other words we shall have to follow in Italy, in Gaul and in Spain separate processes, if not of reconstruction at least of 'shaking down' to new sets of conditions. We shall have to see how each of these accommodates itself to the fact that 'its world (*i.e.*, the Mother Empire) has failed it'; and all the time we shall hear the ruler of that world asserting that there has been no such failure, that the said world is very much alive, very Roman, and an Empire.

Our task would be an easier one if we could get at any real idea of the view which the barbarian kings took of their new positions. Had they any foresight of the proud destinies of their several nations? German historians have been very apt to ascribe some such foresight to their old heroes, and English historians have upon the whole been inclined to follow German. One Teutonic King of Italy, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, did, indeed, order his Roman friend, Cassiodorus the younger, to write a history of the Goths;[1] but it seems to have been rather of an apologetic nature, and designed to show the Romans that the Goths were not such bad fellows after all, and that Roman gentlemen need not be ashamed to be called their subjects. Apart from this, one has to judge the mental attitude of such kings by their acts, and, with few exceptions, these acts seem for a long time to point in one direction only, namely, a desire to remain under the suzerainty of the Roman Empire, and a conviction that that Empire alone can legalise their power.

And yet there is a sense in which the advent of Odoacer at Ravenna marks an epoch, for the barbarian seems to have had some dreams of an united if not of an independent Italy. In many different ways he showed himself to be an active, pushing fellow. For instance, he appointed, without consulting Zeno, a Prefect of Rome, and after a

[1] This history is known to us only through the version of it by Jordanes, a man of 'barbarian' descent, who wrote, probably in the Eastern half of the Empire, about the year 551. If the book did come from the East, it must have been one of the last Latin works written there.

few years interval a consul.[1] He dealt severely with other invaders or would-be invaders, such as Thuringians and Rugians, who were pressing on his north-eastern frontiers. He dominated Rhætia; and when he had built himself a little fleet at Ravenna to keep off Vandal pirates, he made use of it to get hold of a strip of land in Dalmatia across the Adriatic. He kept rather a heavy hand upon popes, and even interfered in a papal election (that of Felix in 483); and once at least he issued coins without putting Zeno's head upon them.

In this attitude he was somewhat helped by the tension which had come about between the Eastern and Western branches of the Church upon the old question of the One or the Two Natures in Christ. In the Eastern patriarchates, in spite of the outward acceptance by East and West of the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon, there was a great deal of discord on this question. The intellectuals of the Eastern capital were, and long remained, for the most part, Monophysite (*i.e.*, for 'One Nature'), while its mob was Catholic; the emperor, therefore, was always in a difficult position between his clergy, his senators, and his mob. He was in a still more difficult position towards the West, which had but one mind, that of the Catholic Bishop of Rome, on the subject. Should the emperor seek out a formula of compromise, which with difficulty the East might accept, he would be certain to bring a hornets' nest about his ears in the West. Zeno sought and found such a formula in the 'Henotikon' or Act of Union, which was indeed fairly well received all over the East. He at once became a heretic in the eyes

[1] Already the practice had arisen for the emperor to appoint one consul for the East and another for the West; Justinian appointed the last Consul for the East in 541; the Western Consulate also died out during his Italian wars, and from that date chronology in the West is reckoned from the 'Indictions,' or quindecennial revisions of taxation, until the tenth century, when the practice of dating from Christ's birth began to be general in the West. The Byzantines complicated matters by taking, in the seventh century, to dating from the creation of the world, which they placed 5509 years before Christ's birth.

of the Roman Church. A fair opportunity thus seemed to be offered to a barbarian 'King' of Italy, if such could be found orthodox enough to please the Italian priests. Odoacer, however, was an Arian, perhaps a bit of a tyrant also, and did not please them. But Zeno pleased them even less, and the theological tension ripened into something like a schism, which lasted through the reign of the next emperor, Anastasius (491-518), for he also showed toleration to the Monophysites.

Now Odoacer in the course of his wars in the Julian Alps, which I may perhaps be pardoned for calling the 'jumping-off place' for would-be invaders of Italy, had come into conflict with the powerful tribe of the Ostrogoths, or East-Goths, whose Western brethren we lately escorted under imperial sanction into Southern Gaul and, without such sanction, into Spain. The Ostrogoths after freeing themselves in the reign of Marcian from Hunnish domination, had wandered about the Balkan Peninsula, and even cast greedy eyes in the direction of Constantinople. By hard knocks to other Teutonic tribes they had won for themselves the leading position in that region, and had recently been granted lands in Pannonia. Bands of them had also taken service as *fœderati*, in which capacity they alternately rendered valuable service on the Euphrates, and plagued the emperor with demands for extravagant pay and for further settlements in land. One becomes, in fact, aware that it profited an emperor very little to 'settle' a tribe in a province like Mœsia, Noricum, or Pannonia, because that tribe at once began to smell more riches further to the southward. Zeno had been feebly trying to play off his settled against his unsettled Goths, with the result that the latter had lately pushed their ravages into Macedonia, Epirus, and even Thrace. Their leader, called Theodoric the Amal, came to Constantinople, where he had already spent much of his boyhood as a hostage, was petted, feared, and, in 484, created consul.

He was born in 454, and so at the date we have reached, was in the prime of manhood. When he heard

of Odoacer's pushings into Pannonia, he disliked the news very much. Zeno also disliked Odoacer, and began to think that this half-tamed Gothic Consul might as well go away to Italy—a province at present of much less importance in imperial eyes than Macedonia or Thrace—and do some handstroke on Odoacer. The bargain was easily arranged, and it was distinctly with Zeno's sanction and with the title of 'Patrician' that Theodoric started at the head of his tribe, with wives, waggons, and children, perhaps 200,000 persons in all, in 488. They fought their way along the Great Western Road in a fearful winter, the men's long beards stiff with ice; tribe after tribe went down before the Gothic horsemen, and when they came to the jumping-off place they met Odoacer. His army, a very heterogeneous one, fought hard at the crossings of the Isonzo and the Adige, but was duly beaten on each occasion. Verona (Bern) was the first great city the Goths took in Italy; hence their leader is, in later German song, *Dietrich von Bern.* Back and back he pushed his foe and in 490 beat him again on the Adda, and it now became a question what the tribes beyond the western Alp-barrier, Burgundians and Visigoths, would say to this victorious career. The former, not yet a prey to the Franks, and with a powerful hold on the North-western Alps, were allies of Odoacer; but King Euric of the Visigoths sent prompt and substantial help to his far-off kinsman, and Odoacer had to creep back into Ravenna. Theodoric made skilful and justifiable use of the imperial sanction which he had obtained and, even before he began the blockade of Ravenna (490), Sicily and Southern Italy had declared for him. Not, however, till 493 did Odoacer give up the game and offer to capitulate. Even then the terms of surrender were violated, and Theodoric slew his rival with his own hands, one of the very few bloody deeds and the only shameful deed ever recorded against him. Some time before this—the date is uncertain—he had been 'lifted on the shield' and proclaimed king; in after years he dated his reign from his victory at Verona. His title was merely 'King of the Goths'; in fact, how-

ever, he was King of Italy, and one of the worthiest who ever reigned there.

Whatever Gothic kingship, or any other Germanic kingship may have meant in the days of Tacitus or to the minds of Whig historians of the nineteenth century, to its contemporaries in the fifth and sixth it seems to have meant absolute power after the model of the later Roman Empire. We search in vain for any traces of regular 'assemblies of free warriors,' or of any other limitations on the Crown; nay, there is no hereditary nobility outside the god-descended 'Amal' race to be found at all. There is no nobility except that earned by service; the king chooses his personal followers or bodyguard as he pleases. The supreme legislative, judicial and military power is his alone, saving always the polite bow towards the Lord of all the World at Constantinople. When the race of the Amals fails, the army of the Goths will indeed elect a king as freely as they will murder a king;[1] but, once elected, and as long as he is unmurdered, he is absolute. And, so far as we can see, it is the same with all other Teutonic tribes who obtained settlements within the Roman Empire.[2]

Nor do we find among the subjects of Theodoric any distinction drawn between Goth and Roman, except that the Goths alone bear arms. They are paid, like the legionaries of old, both by donations and rations (*annonæ*), and for this the Italians have of course to be taxed, presumably upon the old Roman plan of land-tax. Whether any regular land settlements were also allotted to these soldiers, we do not know. Odoacer's *fœderati* had claimed one-third of Italian lands, but had they got them? if they

[1] 'The Goths,' says Gregory of Tours, thinking perhaps more of his contemporaries, the Visigoths, in Spain, than of the Ostrogoths, 'have the detestable habit, when one of their kings displeases them, of killing him and putting another in his place' (*Historia Francorum*, iii., 30).

[2] The Lombards, who did, and several Germanic tribes, *e.g.*, the Bavarians, who did not obtain such settlements, had an hereditary nobility; but even with them we find no traces of the origin of a 'Parliament' or a 'Constitutional Monarchy.'

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had, such lands, being naturally forfeited, may have passed to Gothic landowners. This is at least probable, but we cannot be sure; for the most part, the Goths appear merely as soldiers garrisoning important cities.[1] The whole system of administration by prefect and senate remains Roman. Learned Romans, like Liberius and the younger Cassiodorus, come to the king's side, write his letters for him, and try to teach him to sign them with his own name; he seems, however, never to have got beyond the first five letters of it, and to have traced these through a stencil plate. Noble Romans of the Anician Gens, the last glories of the dying senate, like Symmachus and Boethius, are his courtiers and personal friends. The Roman law seems, for any evidence we have to the contrary, to be the law for all his people, though he also claims legislative power and issues edicts;[2] he solemnly republishes in one of his edicts many of the titles of the Code of Theodosius II.; in fact, as he writes to the emperor, he is taking the Imperial system for his model. This, however, is not till after 497, when Anastasius, who had at first left his letters unanswered, was brought to acquiesce in Theodoric's dominion in Italy, and to confirm to him the title of patrician. Catholic bishops also came to the Gothic Court, and were graciously received by this Arian king, who from the first had promised security of life and property to all who would accept his rule; from a Catholic, Maximinian, afterwards Bishop of Ravenna,

[1] Schröder, in his *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*, argues that the old Roman system of billeting troops, whether Roman or barbarian, on the Provincials, was made the basis of a land settlement when the barbarians had got into the provinces for good; that the shares of land allotted to the barbarians out of the estates of each Roman landowner differed in the different countries, but that one-third was the normal share; he admits that in Gaul there was no such robbery of the Provincials (Schröder, pp. 103-5).

[2] It is from analogy only that we can argue that a Goth would at least claim to live by (or as the phrase went 'to live') Gothic law, *i.e.*, primitive Teutonic custom. If he was allowed to do so, Theodoric's tribunals must have been acquainted with such custom, and administered it to Goths.

we get what is perhaps the best chronicle of his reign.[1]

Everything which recalled the past glories of Rome was dear to Theodoric. In the year 500 he visited the city, bestowed honours on the senate, addressed a public meeting in the Forum, gave chariot races and food to the plebs. His care for ancient buildings was exemplary; he enjoined the prefect to restore Pompey's theatre; he carried on the drainage of the Pomptine marshes, and he was a great restorer of aqueducts. Indeed, it is quite possible to maintain that but for 'this Goth,' the remains of classical antiquity, whether built or written, might have perished altogether in Italy; for it was his friend Cassiodorus who not only sketched out the system on which mediæval education was afterwards to rest, but also in his old age retired into a monastery founded by himself and set his monks to the task of copying Latin manuscripts, a work of which the next famous Roman in history, Pope Gregory the Great, would certainly have disapproved. To the Church also, although he refused to persecute Jews and punished those who did so, Theodoric, if in himself an Arian evil, was also a necessary evil as long as the quasi-schism with the East lasted. For, although Anastasius made professions of his adhesion to the decrees of Chalcedon, he by no means lived up to them, and generally showed himself most impiously inclined towards religious peace and the *Henotikon*. The Popes of the time were intent on condemning the memory of a tolerant Patriarch of Constantinople called Acacius, and on grouping all his adherents, living and dead, under the penalties of excommunication; and everyone knew what that penalty involved in the next world. The East would not hear of this, and yet the emperors still claimed the right of confirming the elections of the Bishop of Rome. And so, Theodoric, Arian as he was, was actually appealed to by the Roman Church in 498, when there was a double election, accom-

[1] M. Duchesne and Dr Hodgkin have come to the conclusion that this bishop was most probably the author of the Chronicle known as the *Anonymus Valesii*, or at least of the Second Part of it.

panied, as was usual in such cases, with a lot of bloody street fighting; and he supported the candidate (Symmachus) to whom the emperor was opposed. He even called Church councils to confirm his man and they confirmed him (501, 502). The tie of Italy to the Empire must have been strained almost to breaking point, when all this could be acceptable to the Italian public.

Ravenna, however, remained Theodoric's capital, and keeps the best traditions of him, both of the Christian art of his day and of his quasi-imperial rule. It was he who built the splendid Church of San Apollinare Nuovo (at first dedicated to St Martin). His own mausoleum, with its wonderful cupola made of a single stone, proves that the art of the engineer was not wholly dead. He had also palaces both at Pavia and Verona. Altogether, though clouded at the end, the thirty-six years of Theodoric's rule afford rather a pretty picture, a sort of Indian summer during which Italy recovered a good deal of prosperity on the eve of her final ruin.

If we consider the king's position in relation to his fellow barbarians to the north and west of the Alps and across the Mediterranean Sea, we shall discover that he was a great deal more than a successful warrior, nay that he was a true statesman, whose object was peace. He came in his old age to give the law to Vandals, Visigoths, Burgundians and Franks alike, and to be the protector of lesser tribes whom some of these would have oppressed. The Vandal with his fleet perhaps at first loomed largest in Italian eyes, and Theodoric's attitude seems to have been that, if ever he had a serious quarrel with the emperor, the Vandals would be his only possible allies, as they would also be his most dangerous potential enemies. But Genseric in his old age (he died in 477) had given up piracy and become almost respectable; he had made treaties both with Zeno and Odoacer, and, though holding on to Sardinia and Corsica, relinquished all but a tiny strip of Sicily. From this Theodoric took no steps to evict the next King of the Vandals, and even sent his own sister to be queen at Carthage. The Vandals in fact

seemed to be the best rooted of the Teutonic settlers within the Empire. They had won Africa in fair fight from the Romans, and so they had grabbed all the richest lands of the province, and reduced the Roman landowners to slavery or to the condition of rent-paying tenants. It might be supposed that their constant wars with the mountain tribes on their southern frontier would keep their swords from rusting. Such, however, was not the case; in the hot and fertile province, surrounded as they were with every luxury, their energies quickly vanished. Moreover they were far more bitter Arians than any other Teutonic tribe; they alone seriously persecuted Catholics. And so, if the East were ever to begin a Catholic and Imperial crusade to recover its power in the West, Africa would not be a bad province to start with. But this was hidden from Theodoric. Meanwhile the Visigoths were always his warm friends; their King Alaric II. married one of his daughters. As for the Burgundians they readily made their peace with him. Both these monarchies maintained on the whole the same attitude towards the Roman law and the religion of their provincial subjects as himself, although the Visigoths occasionally showed themselves less tolerant to the Catholics.

Not so the Franks, of whom we have as yet hardly heard since the days of Constantine the Great. From the very first these persons stand out in contrast with other Teutonic tribes. Like our Saxon forefathers they are foot-soldiers,[1] heathens, and men of bloody hands. Though they have frequently served as *fœderati* in Roman armies, they have not learned Roman discipline or respect for Rome; they have no defensive armour and they use missiles rather than lances, namely, short barbed javelins and short battle axes which can either be thrown or wielded. Some of them carry shields so large that they

[1] Professor Oman well points out that the tribes who came from the 'steppe' country, north of the Lower Danube, like the Goths, or who had perhaps sojourned there long, like the Lombards, were natural horsemen; the Saxons and Franks on the contrary came from the marshy country by the Elbe and Weser mouths, and so were naturally foot-soldiers. (Art of War in the Middle Ages.)

can float across rivers on them.[1] Further they already fight in the dense 'column' of men to which their descendants will cling down to 1815.

Their law—the 'Law of the Salians,' so called from their home on the Sala or Yssel at the back of modern Holland—has no touch of Roman in it; it is, like the early Saxon laws, full of man-price (*wergild*), of kindreds, of legalised bloodfeud, of weird German symbolic acts; daughters do not inherit family land, only sons. Their first incursions into the Gaulish Provinces had been accompanied by far more cruelty to the Gallo-Roman landowners than those of Visigoth or Burgundian. The Walloon (*i.e.* Celtic) population of Southern Belgium is very possibly a result of a large displacement of Gallo-Romans from Lorraine and Champagne at the first inrush of the Franks; further south too some may have been driven from the plateau of Langres into the inhospitable mountain region of the Vosges. The lines of Frankish migration are, however, rather uncertain, and the most natural 'gate' for them to enter by would be the low hill country that separates the sources of the Scheldt from those of the Somme. Before 450, perhaps as early as 430, we find a Frankish tribe as far west as the river Somme; and, in the latter half of that century, when the Huns have come and gone, we hear of a Frank king, Childeric the 'Merovingian,' fighting the Emperor Majorian's 'patrician' Ægidius, taking Cologne and Trier, and pushing on to the Loire, where he meets some Saxons, who presumably have come up that river from its mouth. This man reigned at Tournay in Belgium, where his actual grave was found in 1653. As the shadowy Roman occupants of the throne at Ravenna successively disappeared beneath the horizon, the little Roman province in Northern Gaul, with a capital at Soissons (Augusta Suessionum), stood out like a lonely rock in a stormy sea, valiantly defended by another patrician, Syagrius, son of Ægidius.[2] Him Clovis, son of Childeric,

[1] Gregory of Tours, iii., 15.

[2] It is interesting to notice the Picard and neighbour districts, long the richest and most populous parts of France, as the last relic of

attacked and beat to pieces in 486, and so became the founder of the mighty state of France, her 'Louis the First,'[1] ancestor of the first of the 'Three Races' of her kings.

He was a terrible barbarian. Soon after his victory he stole or enticed away a niece of a Burgundian king, Clotilda, who made him promise to become a Christian, and, like herself, a Catholic. Not until 496 did he, in the middle of a battle (against some equally heathen Alamans) which was going against him, remember this promise. Then he called upon his wife's God and, of course, immediately won his battle. Forthwith he and three thousand fierce Franks with him were baptised by St Remigius, Bishop of Rheims.[2] And so at last the Catholic Church has got a stout barbarian sword upon its side. Clovis' conception of his new faith was a remarkable one; when told the story of Christ's sufferings and death, 'If I and my Franks had been there,' said he, 'we would have avenged Him.' The whole spirit of the Crusades, which were so essentially French, both in their conception and execution, was already in those words.

The ease with which the Gallo-Romans accepted the rule of this blood-stained ruffian, coalesced and became one people with his Franks, and served, from the first, in his army (presumably in the old Roman legionary equip-

Roman dominion in Gaul; Laon was perhaps the most serious rival as a capital that Paris ever had; Rheims was a competitor of Tours for sanctity. At the bridge of Soissons converge roads to England, Flanders, and Germany.

[1] The actual order of the Kings Louis is not reckoned from Clovis or any Merovingian, but from Louis I., son of Charlemagne of the second race of French kings.

[2] No contemporary tells the story of the holy *ampulla* brought full of oil by a dove from heaven when Clovis was going to be baptised. It is first found in Flodoard's *History of the Church of Rheims* (i., 13). Flodoard who lived 894-966 may have copied from a life of St Remigius by Hincmar; an obscure reference to it is found in the ninth-century annals of Saint-Bertin. But later story-tellers mix up the baptism with the anointing to the kingship, and later kings of France were anointed at their coronation with oil consecrated in this *ampulla*.

ment, *i.e.*, with defensive armour), shows how great was the power of the Catholic faith, and shows, therefore, how stupid or how unfortunate were Goths, Burgundians and Vandals in clinging to their Arianism. Rejoicing in his new faith, and eager to fulfil its precepts as expounded to him by his bishops, Clovis sprang at the Burgundians, at the Visigoths, and smashed them one after the other. There is no sort of doubt that the Catholic subjects of these Arians, if they did not actually invite the Franks, threw all their sympathies into their cause. Even bishops like St Cæsarius of Arles were openly accused of treasonable correspondence with Clovis. Gaul apparently lay at the mercy of the Franks until Theodoric, watching the line of the Alps from his palace at Verona, began to open his eyes to this new danger. Alaric II., the Visigothic king whom Clovis had just slain at Poitiers (507), was Theodoric's son-in-law, and Clovis was already besieging the great Southern city of Arles when the Ostrogothic horsemen appeared (510) for its deliverance. This time, after a fierce battle, the lance beat the battle axe, and the course of Frankish victory was stayed. Theodoric united Provence with his own kingdom, saved Gallia Narbonensis for his Visigothic cousins, and even procured a temporary re-establishment of the kingdom of Burgundy, of which a considerable tract was given in 523 to Theodoric himself, and which the Franks only finally subdued eight years after his death (534).

But the whole of Northern Gaul was a Frankish kingdom, and Clovis murdered all his relatives and rivals with magnificent impartiality. He must have exterminated nearly all the old ruling families, if there ever had been such, for there is no trace in sixth-century Frankish history of any nobility other than that of service to the Crown; all freemen whether of Frank or Gallic race appear equally liable to taxes and military service; and, like Theodoric's, the personal followers (called 'antrustions') of the king are chosen by him from all classes. How far the dominion of Clovis extended on the right bank of the Rhine, we cannot say; only we hear of

constant wars with Alamans and Thuringians, and of Theodoric's incessant watchfulness to save Rhætia from the Franks. In fact it is Clovis who begins, from his secure possession of Gaul, to reverse the set of the tide of men, which for five hundred years at least has been to the West. Within fifty years from his death the Eastern boundaries of his grandchildren's power have reached the Lech and the Elbe; there they have confronted and fought Slavonic races. There was in this movement no 'consciousness of destiny'; all a Frank king saw was so much territory he had grabbed, so much more he intended to grab, and somebody else's hoard of treasure which he would steal if he could. From some victory of the Franks at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century, the valley of the Main received a strong Frank colony and the name of 'Franconia,' which still appears on some atlases; it is probable that the Alamans were driven from this district further to the south, and finally settled in the modern territories of Wurtemburg and Baden, which in the next ages were called first Alamannia and then Swabia. The French name for Germany, L'Allemagne, is no doubt a survival of racial hostility dating from these days. When Gregory of Tours uses the word 'Francia,' he means the Rhine Valley and Frankish possessions *east* of the Rhine; the rest is to him still 'Gaul.' It was only in the next three centuries that *Francia* steadily extended its meaning to include all north of the Loire and east of the Couesnon.

The Gallo-Roman clergy cried their new sovereign to the skies, and in return he and, with few exceptions, his descendants showed a careful respect for the ever-increasing riches of the Church. He sent embassies to Constantinople, and Anastasius, to whom Gaul was a mere far-away name, graciously nominated him consul; when Clovis went to pay his devotions to the blessed St Martin at Tours, he dressed for the part. Gregory of Tours who tells the story is evidently hazy as to the meaning of the terms 'Consul' and 'Augustus.' If only Clovis' territory could have passed whole to one of his sons, an United Kingdom of France might have come into existence

several centuries earlier than it did. But, when he died in 511, his kingdom was divided in accordance with Frankish custom among his four sons; and Theodoric was relieved of his greatest fear, for these young men at once began to quarrel with each other.

In his later years the Ostrogothic king appears almost as an Emperor of the West; to him the tribes of Central Germany looked as their protector, to him the Burgundians and Visigoths. Noricum, Rhætia, Pannonia and the whole Dalmatian coast were in his possession, and he guarded them carefully against worse barbarians. In the Adriatic and, as the Vandal power declined, in the open Mediterranean the fleet of Ravenna ruled the waves. It was not likely that Constantinople would long look on unmoved at such a phenomenon.

In that beautiful city the long reign of Anastasius had been preparing the way for the longer reign of Justinian. In religious matters the emperor had little quiet. There was a strong Catholic party which had always resented the *Henotikon;* it worried the emperor throughout his life, and blackened his memory after his death. Yet in secular matters he had done fairly well; he had fortified his Persian frontier, he had built the fifty-mile-long wall thirty-five miles north of the capital, from Selymbria on the Sea of Marmora to the Black Sea; it was a mighty line of defence, and had a broad ditch behind it along which boats could be towed. He had remitted at least one most vexatious tax, and yet he left a large treasure to his successors. He had reorganised the army and cared incessantly for the comfort of his soldiers; the successful campaigns of Belisarius and Narses under Justinian owed everything to Anastasius' forethought. But all this counted for nothing in Catholic eyes when set against 'the deadly and damnable sin of toleration.' Three successive insurrections disturbed his last years, and during the third of these Anastasius died, at a great age, in 518. The throne was seized by the Captain of the Guard, Justin, an old soldier, on his father's side of humble, perhaps of Slavonic origin, but adopted by the great senatorial house

of the Anicii. His elevation was practically an election by the Catholic faction among the soldiers. A reaction at once set in; Monophysites and Arians were excluded from Church, Army and Civil Service. A complete reconciliation with the Western Church was set on foot and, to the prejudice of Theodoric, triumphantly carried out.

Theodoric had never taken any steps to hinder such a reconciliation, though he must have known that it would threaten his power; but he was vexed when he heard of the commencement of persecution of the Arians in the Eastern capital. He was still more vexed when he discovered traces of a correspondence, which perhaps was really a conspiracy, among the Roman senators with the new Court of Constantinople. We have no means of ascertaining the truth about this matter; but it seems clear, first, that the native barbarian woke in the aged Gothic king (he was hard on seventy), and, secondly, that the senate played a very mean part. After denunciation, not by Gothic but by Roman courtiers, two of the leading senators, Boethius and Symmachus, were condemned to death by that very senate which we can only suppose to have been equally guilty, if guilt there was, with them. Boethius' fate has become celebrated, because he was not only the intimate friend of Theodoric, but also the last learned man of the West, translator of Aristotle, Platonist, astronomer, mathematician, mechanician, and author of the most popular philosophical treatise of the Middle Ages,[1] the *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, written during his imprisonment. He was put to death in 523. In the next year Theodoric, with strange simplicity, despatched a very unwilling Pope, John I., to Constantinople to remonstrate against Justin's treatment of the Arians. John was only too well received in the East, and having totally failed to fulfil any part of his mission, was imprisoned on his return

[1] Professor W. P. Ker calls him 'the interpreter of the ancient world and its wisdom, accepted by all the tribes of Europe from one age to another, and never disqualified in his office of teacher, even by the most subtle and elaborate theories of later schools' (*Dark Ages*, p. 101).

to Ravenna and died in prison—obviously a Catholic martyr.

One perceives, however, that, if the great Gothic king had left a stalwart son behind him, the most orthodox ruler of the East would have thought twice before attempting to recover Italy with the sword. But when Theodoric died (526) his representatives were his only legitimate daughter Amalasuntha, already a widow, and her son Athalaric aged ten. Only one other man of Amal descent, so far as we know, remained in Italy, Theodahat, an exceedingly unpopular Romanised Goth, and a false knave into the bargain. Athalaric was recognised as king and Amalasuntha as regent. A woman of equal culture and high spirit, she was even more devoted to the traditions of Roman civilisation than her father, and perhaps even unduly anxious to educate her boy in what remained of these traditions. Cassiodorus continued in office as her prime minister. The rough Gothic soldiers, who had perhaps grumbled at such tastes in their hero-king, had no mind to tolerate them at all in a woman, and seem to have set the boy against his mother. She vowed, and began to take vengeance on these men, but first secretly asked for help from Constantinople in case she should need it. Nothing more opportune for the ruler of that city could have happened.

ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER IV

The TIME covered is, roughly, the sixth century.

The EVENTS described are—(1) The career of the Emperor Justinian as lawgiver, builder, statesman, and conqueror; especially the reconquest of Africa and Italy by his generals, Belisarius and Narses, and the consequent destruction of the Vandal and Ostrogothic nations; the results of that conquest; the origin of monasticism in the West; certain theological difficulties of Justinian, especially with the weak popes who preceded Gregory the Great. (2) The coming of the Avars into the Balkan Peninsula, and of the Lombards into Italy, 568. (3) The weak successors of Justinian at Constantinople, and the career of the famous Pope Gregory the Great, 590-604.

The chief ACTORS are, with the exception of Justinian, not kings or emperors; but a table of the rulers at Constantinople is necessary.

(1) JUSTIN I., usurped the throne, 518, died 527.
His *Nephew* was
JUSTINIAN I., 527-565, married to Theodora (who died 548).
He had two *Nephews* of importance, Germanus, died 567, and
JUSTIN II., Emperor, 565-578.
|
A Daughter, who married
TIBERIUS II., 578-582.
|
A Daughter, who married
MAURICE, 582-602.
Deposed and murdered by the usurper, PHOCAS, 602-610,
who was deposed and
murdered by
HERACLIUS I., 610-641.
(See Table in Chapter VI.)

(2) Of importance, also, are the last Ostrogothic rulers in Italy:—

THEODORIC, died 526.
|
His Daughter,
AMALASUNTHA, and her second Husband (?) THEODAHAT,
died 535. died 536.
|
Her Boy, ATHALARIC, died 534. Her Girl, MATASUNTHA, who married the usurper, WITIGES, died 539.

Unconnected with these is the last Gothic King of Italy,
TOTILA, died 552.

CHAPTER IV

THE EMPIRE NOT DEAD YET

OMNIA castella expugnari posse dicebat, in quæ modo asellus onustus auro posset ascendere. (*Cicero, to Atticus*, i., 16, 12.)

AND now the ruler of Constantinople was no longer the rough old soldier Justin but his nephew Justinian, who came to the throne in 527—the most remarkable man that ever occupied the throne of New Rome. The nine years of his uncle's government had been marked mainly by a vigorous prosecution of the Persian war, and Justinian was already forty-four years old when he was crowned. By the side of him was crowned the wonderful beauty Theodora, of whose origin strange tales were told—after her death. Whatever we may come to think of the emperor's character—patient, abstemious, laborious, suspicious, ruthless—he may at least claim to have been one of the best served and the most fortunate men in history. He codified the law of Rome into such a shape that in after ages his code became the basis of all civilised European systems of law except the English. He reconquered for the direct rule of the Roman Empire, with means which appear to us ludicrously slender and ill-adapted for the purpose, Africa, Italy, and a great deal of Spain. He was lord of the sea from Alexandria to Bordeaux. He not only built churches by the hundred (in the literal sense of the figure), but he covered the eastern and central portions of his dominions with strong fortifications against external foes and internal risings. And he kept at bay in the Balkan Peninsula, by diplomacy and gold almost without fighting, barbarians of an infinitely

more noxious kind than had yet invaded 'Europe.' And, when he died, the whole system he had erected crumbled to pieces in such a very few years, that he has been accused, as it appears to me unjustly, of having rather exhausted civilised Europe than strengthened it, of having only smoothed the path for the final barbarian deluge.

'The most celebrated system of jurisprudence known to the world ends' (if I may be allowed slightly to vary Sir Henry Maine's text) 'as it had begun, with a code.' Before Justinian had been six months upon the throne his great jurist, Tribonian, had begun the work of harmonising into one system all the principles of Roman law, whether derived from the dim and distant code (called the Twelve Tables) of the early republic, from the *Senatus-consulta* of the later republic, from the constitutions of the principes and emperors, from the *Codex Theodosianus* which had arranged them, from the edicts of the prætors (who had applied principles of equity *jus gentium* where strict civil law *jus civile* had failed to meet the case), or from the *Responsa Prudentum* or body of counsel's opinion on hard cases. It was not the first time such a thing had been attempted; in the second century Gaius had written his *Institutes*, as a legal text-book for legal students, and these institutes were taken as the groundwork of Justinian's own. Now, however, for the first time 'Law' and 'Equity' were fused into one system, for the whole of the civilised world, in the name and by the authority of one man, the emperor. Stark and uncontrolled by any human power, his royalty stands out; it is royalty that alone gives sanction to a law. That is why nations, which in after ages clumsily hammered out for themselves the rudiments of what we call 'Constitutional Government' or 'Limited Monarchy,' or nursed anything like an efficient native system of customary law, were unwilling to receive Justinian's code as the basis of their legal system, until some external power was strong enough to force it on them. Alone the system of that singular people the English has proved tough enough to resist it altogether. The work, as perfected in the sixth century, divided itself into three

branches, the Codex of Statutes (*leges*), (529),[1] the Digest of Common Law (*jus*), otherwise called the Pandects, (533), and the Institutes, a brief and scientific exposition of the principles underlying the whole (533). It is this last that all students of law regard as their primary text-book at the present day.

And before the Imperial legislator had been two years in power he had also shown how intimate was to be the connection of his Crown with the Christian Church, by closing for ever (529) the last open doors within which Greek philosophy, alas! too much suspected of pagan leanings, still brought things to the test of reason; the doors, namely, of the University of Athens. The professors of the liberal arts—there were but seven of them left—finding themselves thus deprived of a livelihood, thought at first of a possible refuge in Persia. The Persia of the Sassanids was not, however, the comparatively civilised country of which they had read in their Herodotus and their Xenophon, and, if they ever went, they soon returned, and probably dragged out an uncomfortable existence in the theological atmosphere of some Greek city. They had better have gone to Southern Italy, where in that very year St Benedict was founding at Monte Cassino, the pattern of all the monasteries of the West; to the monasteries such learning as was permitted to survive was soon to fly for refuge. A great German historian has well pointed out that, when free discussion of philosophical subjects was prohibited, Christian theology was the greatest loser. Not only did it lose its one possible opponent, but its training ground also. All the great theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries had been schooled in philosophy; and, for five hundred years to come, no more original ideas found their way into theology, no more original expositors of that science arose. Ignorance too of everything except theology was a necessary result. This had indeed been long progressive. To the 'fathers' of the Church there was something impious in all explorations of the secret of Nature, indeed in all

[1] Second Edition, 534.

knowledge that did not prove or confirm the truth of Scripture.

In Justinian's sixth year his throne was almost upset by a fearful tumult in his capital, known as the 'Sedition of Niké.' The remnants of the unorthodox party, which had been suppressed in 518, were perhaps at the bottom of this movement, but ostensibly the ringleaders were partisans of a certain 'faction' among the chariot-racers in the circus. We have already learned how great was the passion for spectacles in the Ancient World. When gladiators died out, chariot-racers became the popular favourites, and chariot-races the most popular spectacle. One imagines that, even in the largest conceivable arena, it must have been an exciting sport to watch, with plenty of collisions, broken limbs and deaths among the drivers; and it often ended in a free fight between their partisans. At this time there were only two factions, called δῆμοι or 'peoples,'[1] the 'blues' and the 'greens'; and every idle blackguard in the city had an hereditary attachment to the one or the other. So vast and so dangerous had these two mobs become that they were already political factors with which every government had to reckon. We must suppose that their wires were generally pulled by some caucus of political agitators of superior intelligence, although it is difficult to prove this. But if one can imagine two rival crowds, which have also become political and religious trade-unions, shouting abusive epithets at each other at a football match, and at last tearing down the ropes and breaking in upon the ground, one may get perhaps some notion of the constant disturbances in the arena of the Eastern capital. Often one of the factions would demand, at the opening of the games, the release of a prisoner, the dismissal of an unpopular Commissioner of Police, or even of a Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the emperor was but too often obliged to give way. Un-

[1] Originally these divisions had some political meaning, and had probably been military divisions of the people of the city. See Professor Bury's excellent Appendix on them in his Gibbon, vol. iv., p. 531.

doubtedly it suited some emperors to have at their disposal a large and dangerous rabble devoted to their cause—provided always that the opposing rabble were not larger and more dangerous.

Now, in 532, the tumult began with the Green faction, which was supposed to be Monophysite, and therefore hostile to Justinian; but, and this was unusual, it ended in a coalition of the most dangerous elements of both factions, the probable explanation of which is the severe pressure of new taxes recently introduced by the government. Half the city was burned in the riot, the palace was all but stormed, a rival emperor was acclaimed in the circus, and only the arrival of the great Macedonian general Belisarius, at the head of regular troops victorious from the Persian wars, saved the situation. There is a story that Justinian had prepared to fly or abdicate, but was prevented by the firmness of his wife. When Belisarius at last stormed the circus, it was at the expense of thousands of lives. But the net result was that the emperor's government became stronger than before.

On the site of the still smoking ruins Justinian began within a few weeks to rear that marvel of art which still preserves his memory in the Turkish capital, the 'Church of the Divine Wisdom,' or 'St Sophia.' The architect was a Greek, Anthemius of Tralles, and the work, at which the emperor in a mason's apron had laboured with his own hands, was finished in five years. 'I have beaten Solomon,' he exclaimed when he saw it completed.

St Sophia and the *Corpus Juris* have defied time. It is not so with the achievement of Justinian, of which we must now treat—namely his recall, by no gentle means, into the bosom of the Mother-empire, of those children in the West who seemed to have all but cut the apron-strings. While Amalasuntha, in her quaking regency at Ravenna, was affording one pretext for interference, a parallel pretext was afforded by the course of events at Carthage. There the Vandals had just deposed a tolerant and Roman-minded sovereign called Hilderic, and set up one Gelimer in his place. Peace with Persia, where

the great warrior Chosroes Nushirvan had just become king, was a necessary preliminary for a war in the Mediterranean, and in 531 Justinian purchased it by a heavy bribe; and, with the blood of Niké scarcely dry on their swords, the soldiers of Belisarius were got ready for an attack upon Africa. This attack would take the form of a Catholic crusade; and such a crusade would indeed have been a perilous job had the Arian form of Christianity any real vitality in it, or were the Arian governments of Ostrogoths, Visigoths, and Vandals capable of combining for their common defence. Amalasuntha however, had promised to shelter the fleet of Justinian in Sicily; and so, in June 533, Belisarius started from the Golden Horn. He was then about twenty-five years of age, and had already reaped laurels on the Euphrates Throughout his wars he was accompanied by his Greek secretary, Procopius of Cæsarea,[1] who has left us a most spirited and intelligent account of his master's victorious career.

The means at that master's disposal were so insignificant, that one comes to the conclusion that he must have been one of the greatest leaders of men in warfare that ever lived. His army, which was conveyed in five hundred transports and escorted by ninety ships of war, rowed by oars, did not exceed 15,000 men of various nationalities. One slips into the habit of calling it a Roman army, because it moved at the will of a Roman emperor, and because the contemporary Greek historians call it Roman; but, in reality, if it were anything beyond a bundle of mercenaries and *fœderati*, it was a Greek

[1] Procopius is a historian whom one may fairly reckon to be classical; he is perhaps best to be compared with Ammianus Marcellinus for, like him, he had seen war actually going on. No doubt he would have compared himself to Herodotus and Polybius both of whom he consciously imitates. Though a Christian, he cares nothing for the theological disputes of his day. Into the vexed question whether he was or was not the author or sole author of the *Anecdota*, commonly called the *Secret History*, I do not feel competent to enter, and I have not drawn upon it in my text. Suffice it to say that this is a book written after the fall of Justinian's system vilifying him and Theodora in every possible manner.

power. The inhabitants of Italy, whether Goths or Italians, spoke of it as 'Greek,' and the only parts of Italy upon which any lasting effects of its victories remained were in the extreme South, the old Magna Græcia. The footmen were largely Greek-speaking Thracians, or barbarous Isaurians from Asia Minor; the cavalry consisted wholly of *fœderati*, Huns (splendid horsemen and bowmen), or Herules. The best strength lay in the heavily armed horse-archers or *cataphracti*, from the Asiatic provinces; they carried lance and sword as well as bow. In spite of its victorious career, one must pronounce it to have been a thoroughly inefficient army, carried in a poor fleet, which took two months to reach Sicily, and whose men openly told their general that if attacked by the Vandals at sea they would fly. The provisions on board were rotten, the water was insufficient. During the whole campaign alternate hanging and petting had to be applied to make the men do their duty; and even Belisarius failed to maintain discipline after his final victory over the Vandals. When left to garrison conquered Africa, nearly half these 'Romans' mutinied and combined with the dregs of the Vandals and with the wild Moors from the *hinterland;* and it was ten years before complete peace was restored in a province which this force had conquered in little more than ten weeks.

Yet in the course of that rapid conquest the patience, the loyalty, and the wonderful resourcefulness of its great general triumphed over all obstacles, even over the continual clamour for hopelessly deferred pay. His landfall on the peninsula of Carthage was made, in September 533, some ten days' march to the south of the city. Gelimer seems to have been entirely unaware that any attack was intended on him, and a large part of his troops were at the time in Sardinia. City after city joyfully opened its gates to Belisarius, and the Vandal attempts at defence were of the most miserable. Only after Carthage had welcomed the invaders within its walls did the Vandal king begin to prepare in earnest for its recapture. Belisarius spent the last two months of the

year in fortifying the city, and then met and utterly defeated Gelimer outside it in the battle of Tricameron. The Vandals taken in the battle were slaughtered wholesale, and the victors flew upon the treasure-chests which the barbarian king apparently carried about with him. The spoil was immense, and no doubt included many objects of value plundered from Rome eighty years before. Gelimer himself fled to Numidia, where he was soon afterwards caught; he was then sent to Constantinople and allowed to live in peace, although he refused to turn Catholic. So was Vandalia wiped off the roll of nations in a three months' campaign. Belisarius, on his return to the East, was granted a Roman triumph; the treasures of the old Jewish temple, which had been found among the Vandal booty, were sent to the Church of Christ's Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Those historians who like scolding the successful characters of history have argued that, if Justinian had only left the Vandals alone, Africa would not, a century later, have fallen to the Arabs; but the history of the last three months of the year 533 does not look as if the indictment were true. On the contrary there is evidence that, for some years before that date, the Vandals were barely holding their own against the Moorish tribes behind them.

Would Gothia, if attacked, stand better than Vandalia? At first it did not seem as if it would. The boy king Athalaric died in 534, and Amalasuntha, though for long secretly in correspondence with Constantinople, now in despair turned to her cousin, the hated and treacherous Theodahat, and offered to share her power with him. Whether they were actually chosen queen and king is doubtful, but they acted as joint rulers, though all the while in secret opposition to each other. The lady was prepared in the last resort to offer the whole of Italy to Justinian, and, when she was murdered by Theodahat in 535, the emperor had an excellent excuse for the invasion which he was preparing. The murderer himself then made several secret and treacherous attempts at negotiation. Justinian had been quite willing to listen to the

offers of both Theodahat and Amalasuntha, and continued to amuse the former by negotiations till the last moment. The year 534 had been employed by him partly in unsuccessful attempts to pacify reconquered Africa, partly in the reduction of Sardinia and Corsica, and also in a mission to the Franks, who had causes of quarrel, religious and other, with the Goths of Italy. Then, in 536, a force of barely 8000 men was despatched under Belisarius to Sicily as the best basis for an attack upon Italy. Sicily was, in fact, at this time, as it had been in the days of the Roman Republic, the granary from which Rome was fed. Palermo alone stood a short siege, and the whole island was in Greek hands by the end of the year. But when Belisarius, who had already landed at Reggio, advanced against Naples it was another story. There the good government of Theodoric was remembered, and the general had to sit down to a regular siege, the first of many which were to mark this devastating war.

Theodahat could have put in motion for the relief of Naples an army which, though we may safely dismiss the enormous figures of Gothic armies given by Procopius (such as '150,000 men'), must have vastly outnumbered the Greeks; but a considerable detachment of Goths had been foolishly despatched to defend Dalmatia, against which the emperor had sent a force by the land road. Moreover, the Gothic king was a coward and a fool, hoping at the time mainly to save his own neck and riches by treasonable negotiations at Constantinople. After a valiant defence the small garrison of Goths was obliged to surrender Naples in September 536, and Belisarius at once advanced by the Latin Way upon Rome. Then the Gothic army mutinied, deposed and slew the wretched Theodahat, and chose a valiant wooden-headed soldier, Witiges, for king. He, poor stupid fellow, must needs fall back upon Ravenna; perhaps in order to prepare against an expected invasion of Franks; perhaps in order to get treasure to pay his soldiers; perhaps in order to legitimise his throne by forcing the last survivor of the Amal race, Matasuntha, daughter of Amalasuntha, to marry him.

But the result was that he gave away the old capital of the world to Belisarius, who entered it unopposed, and at the invitation of the Pope, at the end of the year.

The attitude of the *Senatus Populusque Romanus* was a curious one. On the one side stood the open Catholic sympathies of the entire Italian priesthood and people, which were nowhere stronger than at Rome; on the other, the city's ancient jealousy of Constantinople and the 'Greeks.' Belisarius might be at the head of a Catholic crusade, but he certainly also represented Constantinople triumphant. One of the surest tests of the general's true greatness is the fact that, within a few weeks, he had conciliated the inhabitants of the city to such an extent that some of them were actually induced to fight in their own defence. Witiges, however, seemed quite unconscious that he, for his part, represented anything but a large body of Gothic fighting men; and we may presume that he and Gothia fell because they failed to see that they were really standing for an independent Italy. Quite possibly they dreaded the Franks even more than they dreaded the Greeks.

But, in March 537, Witiges advanced with an enormous army to subject the walls of Aurelian to their first real test of siege—for a year and nine days. Belisarius, though he had now only 5000 men with him, had carefully repaired these walls and had stored the city with Sicilian corn. If his 5000 were too few to man the defences, the Goths were also too few to blockade very strictly the whole of the twelve-mile circuit of wall. But they did form great camps, entrenched with earthworks, opposite the principal gates; and, when they placed another camp at Portus (Porto Romano), on the right bank at Tiber-mouth, although Ostia still remained in the hands of the defenders, the city soon began to experience famine. As for siege-craft, nothing could possibly be clumsier than that of the Goths. Of archery, and indeed of the use of any missile weapons, they seem to have been wholly ignorant. At first we read of battering-rams and also of huge wooden towers on wheels, filled with men and painfully drawn forward towards the walls; but Belisarius' Huns shot the

oxen which drew them, and left the towers sticking in the mud just out of reach of the walls. After that the besiegers could only throw away men in frantic attempts to storm. One terrible resource was indeed open to them: they broke down the noble aqueducts, and reduced the city to drink from the muddy Tiber and from such springs as existed inside. But this destruction, the traces of which we can still see in the gaunt remains of the arches of the Aqua Claudia, stretching like broken festoons of stone across the *Campagna*, turned also against the destroyers, for the water simply poured on to the plain and rendered many of their camping-grounds pestiferous swamps. The famous malarial mosquito took up his abode therein, and there, though the swamps have dried, he remains until this day.

On the other hand, in conducting the defence Belisarius shone as perhaps never man shone. His main weapon was the *balista* or huge catapult, worked by leverage, throwing bolts which went clean through an armoured man. His sorties were fierce, and always unexpected. He enrolled the unwilling Romans as a sort of auxiliary militia—not that he expected them to fight, but they made a sort of show on the walls. Treason was the thing to be most feared from them, so he changed their posts incessantly, changed also every fortnight the locks and keys of the great gates. His light horsemen scoured the *Campagna* under the very noses of the Goths; trusty footmen prowled round inside the walls with lyme-dogs on the scent for traitors within. The useless mouths were sent away before the worst pinch of starvation was felt, and the Goths, either mercifully or stupidly, let them go; most of them found refuge in Sicily or Southern Italy, or died of starvation on the way; the depopulation of Rome was one of the necessary results of the long siege. Once Belisarius received a small reinforcement of 1600 troops from the coast, hardly enough, one would suppose, to repair the waste of war. Once a truce for three months was concluded, but it was very ill observed on both sides. But by the end of 537 considerable reinforcements from Constantinople began to land in the southern ports of Italy, and some of these advanced

far enough to harry the besiegers in their camps outside Rome. At last some Greek troops having seized Rimini, the next big harbour to the south of Ravenna, Witiges was obliged to draw off from the great siege for the defence of his capital (March 538); Belisarius fell upon his rear-guard and inflicted severe loss upon it as it crossed the Tiber in its retreat. When we come to sum up the results of the siege of Rome we shall see that, on the one side, the flower of the Gothic nation had perished of fever, pestilence, and famine in the attack; on the other side most of the precious memorials of antiquity, including perhaps the great Ulpian Library in Trajan's forum, had been destroyed in the defence. The *Campagna* was utterly ruined, and is only painfully recovering at the present day.

The next act in the drama is startling, and, in our present dearth of information, almost inexplicable. Justinian must already have begun to suspect the loyalty of his victorious general, and, so far as we know, entirely without reason, unless we can find such reason in the essentially Machiavellian mind of a great statesman, reflecting, in the secret chamber of his palace at Constantinople, on the natural badness of mankind. Perhaps the emperor argued thus: 'This man has with him a very large contingent of soldiers who have now served him through three great wars, and been gorged with plunder and riches through his liberality; what more likely than an attempt on his part to seize the Crown of Italy?' As we shall see in the sequel, the Goths thought and even suggested the same, but the loyalty of Belisarius was proof against the suggestion. But, for whatever reason, the commanders of the reinforcements which the emperor now sent to Italy came with orders authorising them to disobey and even to overrule Belisarius. Among them was a man, at present of no military experience, but destined one day to prove himself a soldier of the first class—Narses the treasurer, a little shrivelled man already advanced in years, and an eunuch.

The Goths, as they retreated northwards, seem to have garrisoned many cities in Central Italy, to have sent to ask

help from the Franks, and also to have sent an embassy to stir up Chosroes, king of Persia. Much discussion took place, therefore, among the Greek commanders as to what their next move should be, and on the whole the opinion of all seems to have been hostile to Belisarius. That general had undoubtedly made one strategical mistake; he had sent a considerable force far to the North to attempt the relief of the city of Milan, which was already being besieged by a Gothic army. Franks, or rather Burgundian[1] dependents of the Franks, were aiding the Goths in the siege, and Belisarius was anxious to hasten to its relief. But Narses said, 'No, let us first relieve our new and far more important conquest of Rimini,' which was also enduring a Gothic siege. Probably Narses was right; Belisarius gave way, and Rimini was relieved. But Milan fell, was plundered, and saw its citizens massacred; and the mere scent of such plunder was enough to bring across the Alps King Theudebert the Frank, with an enormous horde, which swept North Italy from end to end, slaying and plundering Goth and Greek with perfect impartiality, and then, wasted with pestilence, melting back over the Alps again. No one could say that the Franks had not contributed their share towards the ruin of Italy. All this, together with renewed trouble from Persia, inclined the emperor towards a truce with the Goths when his conquest of Italy was but half accomplished; Narses was recalled in anger, and Belisarius, who had meanwhile been steadily winning towns in the central provinces, received orders of recall just when he found himself in a position to blockade the main Gothic force within the walls of Ravenna. The 'strategy' of 538, 539 sounds to us very much confused, and even haphazard; but we must try to think of the Greek general as in possession of a small but very mobile force, resolved to avoid pitched battles with an unwieldy and immobile enemy, and himself an absolute master of all siege-craft whether of attack or defence. We must

[1] The kingdom of Burgundy had been extinguished by the Franks in 534, and its territories were now ruled by a Frankish king; *vide infra*, p. 176.

also add that the army which could move the faster had the better chance of avoiding starvation.

At some stage in his blockade of Ravenna, Belisarius received a strange offer from within the city—the crown of Italy for himself. It was perhaps not so strange after all. The Goths were divided between their fears of Franks and of Greeks; the genius of Belisarius, and the valour of his *cataphracts* (who would be almost certain to follow him) might once more restore the Gothic nation, at least to the condition of the armed peace of Theodoric's reign. Nor, in view of the history of the last two centuries, would there be anything very extraordinary in such a man making himself king or even Cæsar. The man, however, was too loyal to the Empire to accept the offer, yet not too honourable to make use of it in order to get Ravenna. He pretended to agree, marched in through the opened gates, and took prisoners King Witiges and his whole army. The king and the vast treasures of Theodoric's palace were shipped off to Constantinople, and thither early in 540, Belisarius also returned.

Thus, in seven years, Africa, the Mediterranean islands, and Italy up to the Po, had been reconquered for the Empire, and Gothia appeared to be almost as much blotted out of the roll of nations as Vandalia. But there were two serious factors in the situation. In the first place, it was an utterly ruined Italy that came back under the wings of the Empire; in the second place, some precarious hold on what is now Lombardy was kept by a Goth called Hildibald, ruling at Pavia, although all the northern provinces of the land had been tossed to be worried by Franks and Burgundians, with a very fair prospect of even worse barbarians (whom we shall soon have to consider), called Avars, coming in from the north-east. If the Goths were to go under for good, it would be more probably in favour of one of these new sets of barbarian invaders than of the distant power of Constantinople, whose interests were soon to become more truly Oriental than European.

The most immediately dangerous of these powers was

that of the Franks. Right down to the end of the sixth century they took every possible opportunity of raiding Italy. Theodoric, we have seen, had thoroughly realised the danger from them, and his attitude towards them had been that of a strongly armed policeman, protecting other tribes north and west of the Alps against them. After Theodoric's death, and their conquests in Thuringia and Burgundy, Justinian had realised the danger also; but, while showing himself feverishly anxious to keep them off the Balkan Peninsula, he had been quite ready to use them against the Goths. Witiges, for his part, had bribed them with Provence, and hoped for their help against the Greeks. They had made treaties with both, and observed neither of them. Theudebert, the East-Frankish king, 534-548, had been the protagonist so far; he had absorbed Alamans and Bavarians, and carried his arms through Rhætia into Noricum; he had designs on Illyria, and perhaps on more besides. He had even coined gold, which was a distinct challenge to the Imperial idea. When the first Gothic war ended in 540, a good deal of North Italy was left in Frankish hands. And at that very time the Persians were bursting the Euphrates barrier in force, and wasting Syria, where they soon afterwards took Antioch. Belisarius had to be sent against them.

Meanwhile, was Italy contented under the Imperial *régime?* She was not. The Byzantine, if Catholic, tax-gatherer seemed to her a worse scourge than the Arian Gothic king. And so the few undefeated Goths remaining in the North began to perceive that their cause was not wholly hopeless. After one or two abortive attempts at kings, they chose a real hero called Totila (or Baduila, as the name is given on his coinage), in 541. He was a strange figure in such an age; some have seen in him a foreshadow of the chivalrous knight of crusading days. Certainly, though an Arian, he was a devout Christian; certainly, also, he was merciful and generous to the vanquished as few then were. But, when he raised his flag in the North, he was barely able to collect an army of 5000 Goths, and most of the strong towns were in Greek

hands. The Greek garrisons drew together and attacked him at Verona; he beat them back (541), and in the next year advanced southwards, growing in strength as he went, and taking city after city in a manner very different from the blundering Witiges. He even collected a little fleet, with which he took Naples and threatened Otranto.

A fearful plague at Constantinople, of which Justinian himself nearly died, prevented any help being sent to Italy in 542; but, in the next year, a fresh peace was purchased with Persia, and Belisarius was ungraciously told that he must go and subdue this Goth at his own expense! No doubt he had accumulated immense private wealth, though never enough to enable him to raise sufficient men for such a task. But his loyalty was proof against all mistrust, ungraciousness, and neglect; and for five years he struggled on with totally inadequate means, flying to and fro by sea from Otranto to Ravenna, to Durazzo (in Epirus), to Porto at the mouth of the Tiber; from Porto he vainly endeavoured to despatch provisions to Rome, which city Totila blockaded with a very large force throughout the year 546. Bessas, a renegade Goth, commanded the walls with a bare 3000 men, and sat utterly inactive inside them; the sufferings of the few people left in Rome were awful. When Totila finally entered at the end of the year, he threatened to destroy the city, and did actually destroy part of the walls; when he retired he took with him, perhaps out of sheer pity, all the remaining inhabitants. For six weeks Rome was as Babylon, 'an habitation of dragons and a court for owls; the wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow.'[1] Belisarius, who soon reoccupied it, could not stay long, though he hastily rebuilt the broken wall. The next two years were spent in endless skirmishes up and down Southern Italy with no decisive result. In 548, Belisarius in despair threw up his unsupported command and returned to Constantinople. He there became Captain of the Guard, but his military career was at an end. Although once, when a tribe of

[1] Isaiah xxxiv. 14.

wandering Huns penetrated to within a few miles of the capital, he was called upon to improvise a defence and did so successfully (559), and although once he was accused of conspiracy and acquitted after a short disgrace, he seems on the whole to have lived at peace and in the enjoyment of riches until his death a few months before Justinian's (565). The well-known story of his blindness and poverty is a fiction of the eleventh century.

Totila, relieved of his great antagonist, speedily mastered Sicily and the whole of Italy, with the exception of the two ports of Ravenna and Ancona;[1] he even took the Ionian Islands and some coast places in Epirus. He made efforts to conciliate the Franks which were rudely rebuffed. Then he offered to Justinian, as one king to another, a firm alliance and the service of his Gothic lances in the field. But Justinian, though his fortunes seemed at a low ebb, and though he had lost his valiant empress in 548, was not the man to give up a plan, and he now sent in 551 his nephew Germanus with a large army by the old land road towards Italy. Perhaps he had only been waiting for some years till he had collected treasure enough to pay an adequate force. Germanus had married the widow of Witiges, whom we may remember as the granddaughter of Theodoric, and perhaps expected to find in Italy Goths who would rally to him as a quasi-heir of their hero king. But he died at Sardica (Sophia) on his march, and his place was taken by the eunuch Narses (552).

Narses was popular, merciful, and now thoroughly trusted by the emperor; he was also extraordinarily liberal to his soldiers, and somewhat shameless in his appeals to their cupidity. We have no Procopius to guide us in the story of his campaign, but it was evidently a swift and successful one. His army was much larger than either army of Belisarius had been; it consisted of the same heterogeneous elements — Huns, Herules, Gepids — and had besides a large contingent of a people of whom we

[1] We must, perhaps, also except some Northern fortresses left in Frankish hands, but we do not know the details.

shall soon hear too much, the Lombards. The Franks, ever on the alert, recommenced their sub-alpine raids, and Totila offered to Justinian everything but the mainland of Italy in order to purchase peace, but the Emperor turned a deaf ear. The first contest, a fierce sea-fight in the Adriatic, ended in a victory for the Greeks and in the liberation of Ancona and Ravenna from blockades which the Goths had begun. Then Narses pressed on against Totila down the Flaminian Way towards Rome. At some spot, called Taginæ, in the Apennine passes, probably either Scheggia or Sassoferrato, one of the very few pitched battles of these wars was fought. Narses, either from suspicion as to the fidelity of his barbarians or owing to the hilly nature of the ground, dismounted some of his cavalry; it was to the bow that he trusted, and the bow won a complete victory. The Gothic king fell either in the field or the flight. A few survivors reached Pavia and chose Teias for king, and he, with a hoard of treasure, marched southwards and made a last stand at Cumæ, but also in vain. Rome surrendered to a short siege, the fifth that it had endured since 537, and the Gothic nation fell with it, this time for good. The mercy and generosity of the old Greek general no doubt won over many Goths to take service under him; and, when he had defeated, in 553, a fierce raid of two Frankish or Alamannic chiefs near Capua, Italy began to settle down to such peace as a ruined land can enjoy.

Narses remained its 'Patrician,' and for twelve years ruled it mercifully and wisely from Ravenna; the old forms of Roman government, prefects, *annonæ*, *curiæ*, even occasionally the shadow of a senate, gleam fitfully at us through the growing darkness; and over all broods the shadow of the tax-gatherer. I have made no attempt to picture the misery of the peninsula during these recent wars, for words would fail to describe it, and might be untrue after all. But a state of things which had left Rome empty of human beings for six weeks must have been pretty bad. The only indication of the coming age is to be found in the growing zeal for the monastic life; the end

of the world seemed very near, and St Benedict and his fellows thought that the main duty of man was to prepare for it; but they saw also that the miseries of the present life might be mitigated by the life of prayer and toil, both manual and mental. Hermit (or solitary) retreat from the world had been well known, even in the West, long before; St Benedict's glory is that he rejected this in favour of a retreat enjoyed in common. His 'Rule,' of poverty, chastity, obedience, and community of life,[1] spread rapidly over the whole of the West during the next hundred years; and, when a great pope arose in the person of Gregory I. and grasped this monastic ideal as the highest of Christian ideals, the Benedictine monks became the stoutest champions of the Papacy against kings and bishops alike.[2] Thus England and Germany, which were to be Christianised in the next two centuries, received Papalism and Monasticism as two of the most integral parts of the Christian faith.

The fall of the Vandal and Gothic nations can hardly be dismissed without some reflection. Why when attacked by such exceedingly weak forces, sent from such a distant base as Constantinople, did they crumble so easily? Was it that they had lost all their energy and vitality in the luxurious South? Was it that they were incapable of subordination, and babies at the arts of war and diplomacy when confronted by such masters of these arts as Belisarius, Narses and Justinian? Was it merely that, as Arians, they had failed to conciliate their Catholic subjects, and utterly failed, as the Franks in Gaul had not failed, to grow into one people with them? Or was it, indeed, that both they themselves and their subjects were unable to shake off the awe of the Mother-Empire, the *Romani*

[1] This is the common summary of it. We search in vain for any such expressions in the Rule of St Benedict itself. Dom Gasquet, in his Preface to Montalembert's *Monks of the West*, sums it up as based upon 'Obedience, Reformation of Manners, Stability.'

[2] We must remember that the Rule of St Benedict never contemplated that the monks as a whole would take holy orders; monk and priest are at first sharply contrasted, although it was held desirable that one or two of the brethren in each monastery should be ordained.

'nominis umbra? It seems that each of these causes contributed something to the success of the Roman emperor.

When we come to the further question whether the Imperial power could be maintained in the newly reconquered lands, we can see that Justinian would certainly do his best to maintain it. Italy was no sooner his than he sent his fleets to Spain and tackled the Visigoths who had been sending help to Totila. The Visigothic royal power was already weak, and a class of powerful nobles was already making itself hereditary. Hence insurrections and wars of succession to the throne, in which one party would be apt to rely on Imperial aid. Justinian's general, Liberius, took many of the Spanish coast fortresses between 554 and 565, and even penetrated inland as far as Cordova. Indeed the last 'Roman' (or rather Greek) garrisons were not expelled from Spain till the year 624; and by that time Spain had long been a Catholic state. For Italy the emperor issued in 554 a great edict, in which he recognised all the laws of Theodoric, Amalasuntha, and even Theodahat, but treated those of Witiges and Totila as of none effect because these kings were 'usurpers.'[1] He reverted to the system of the older empire, and combined military and civil governorships in the same hands. He catholicised Arian churches everywhere, and built at Ravenna the glorious octagon of San Vitale. He kept a firm hand on the Church—the popes indeed said too firm a hand—and no pope would have ventured to play in his time the part that Gregory the Great was soon to play. Whether there was or was not in the later sixth century a permanent Byzantine governor in Rome, other than the prefect of the city, is a moot point. In the seventh century we occasionally find such a person, and he lives perhaps in a corner of the Palatine House; sometimes he is

[1] The *Corpus Juris* of Justinian was intended to apply to the whole empire; but north of the Alps it got no footing until a much later date. In Italy the Pandects seem never to have been studied until the rise of new schools of law in the twelfth century; but the Code of 534 and the later legislation of Justinian were epitomised into shorter forms and remained the basis of Italian law.

called *Dux* or Duke, and sometimes *Magister Militum*; he is then generally in conflict with a strong pope or bullying a weak one.

These activities of Justinian were not confined to Italy. Even in the worst of times he had poured out money like water on the fortification of his frontiers, on all of which he undertook work which recalled the days of Aurelian and Probus. Palmyra was strengthened against the 'Saracens,' who were the scourge of Syria for centuries before Mahomet; Dara (which Anastasius had built to replace Nisibis), Constantina (an outwork of Edessa), Circesium and Callinicum[1] (at the passages of the Euphrates), Theodosiopolis in Armenia—all these against the Persians; even Armenia again looked like a Roman province. Far away in the Crimea the old Greek cities were rewalled against wandering Huns. The whole Danube frontier was patched up again, although one fears that this must have been too late, for Avars and Slavs had already got into Pannonia and Mœsia, if not further south still. But their undesirable activities were curbed by a thorough rewalling of the Balkan cities, and Hellas was protected by a great defence-work at the very spot where Leonidas had died. If the Fates had only

> Of those three hundred granted three
> To make a new Thermopylæ,

Greece might have escaped the Slavonic deluge. The long wall of Anastasius north of Constantinople received additions, though the actual walls of the city itself as they stand to-day are not the work of Justinian, but probably date from the reign of Theodosius II., if not of Constantine I. Time would fail to tell of the roads, bridges, and aqueducts of the thousand churches that Justinian built; even distant Africa was rechurched as well as fortified. But it was men and not walls that the Empire needed, and, alas! men were lacking. Though the New Rome is supposed to have possessed a million of inhabitants in the weeks in which the Old Rome stood without one,

[1] On the site of the former Nicephorium.

these inhabitants could hardly any longer be called even by courtesy Roman. In the sixth century the administrators and the administration of the Empire became definitely Greek. If the language of Hellas had been utterly forgotten in the West, that of Italy was equally forgotten in the East, and the Greek which took its place in common use was no longer Hellenic but 'Romaic,' the immediate ancestor of the 'modern Greek' of the present day, in which men call a horse an unreasonable beast (ἄλογον). The population which learned to speak this language was the most mixed in the world; perhaps the Jewish was almost the predominant, as it was the richest element in it, but every species of Asiatic barbarian swaggered in the streets and yelled in the arena. Commercial activity was no doubt great; trade with the Far East was still open *via* the Red Sea and also *via* the Caspian, although the long wars with Persia must have pressed hardly on the old direct trade route across Euphrates and so to the Persian Gulf. It was Justinian who first imported silkworms from China, and established the manufacture of silk on European soil.

I said above that even in Italy the emperor kept a firm hold on the Church. He did even more than that, for he actually prevailed in a theological contest against it. An attempt to treat the theological disputes of the sixth century from the point of sober reason is difficult, mainly because they would be almost comic did not they seem to us so frightfully profane. And yet it is necessary to speak of them, because their effect upon later history was so great. Orthodox as Justinian was and learned as he was, he had the passion of his age and country for theological hair-splittings, and the fact that he at last gave way to this passion, when he might have compromised and remained master both of East and West, is perhaps rather to his credit as a man. You will remember that the origin of the trouble from 480 to 518 between the churches of the East and that of Rome was not only the Monophysite heresy itself, but also the determination of the popes to condemn the memory of the Patriarch Acacius

who had tolerated it. For a long while the Eastern patriarchs had resisted this; they were willing enough to treat drastically any live heretics they could catch, but they resented the idea of persecuting the memory of those who had not been declared heretics during their lifetime. A philosopher, could such a person have breathed in such an atmosphere, might have pronounced the latter the less harmful pastime of the two; but there were no philosophers left. Pope after pope declared that nothing short of the eternal torment of Acacius would satisfy him, and at last the Eastern Church reluctantly gave way; to the flames no doubt the soul of Acacius obediently went, wherever it had been waiting since his death.[1]

Here stepped in the emperor's own unfortunate *penchant* for the finer shades of theological distinction. If Acacius had been a heretic, it seemed to him, after a long course of reading, so had three other learned theologians (whose names do not matter to us). He set his Imperial teeth and said they must be damned. Quite unconnected with this at first was his determination to be master of the Papacy, and to force upon Rome whom he pleased as bishop, Vigilius in 537 and Pelagius in 555. Each *may* have bought his Papacy by promising to follow Justinian's lead in theological matters, but we have no proof that it was so. But, once in possession of the Roman See, a pope drank in resistance to Constantinople from the very air which breathed around the Lateran palace. When, therefore, Vigilius was told that he must anathematise the unfortunate Three, against whose souls the emperor had resolved to proceed, he at first refused. He was a poor shuffling creature quite unfit for his post; he foolishly obeyed a peremptory summons to Constantinople, and there for six years he leaned now to one side and now to the other in the matter of these Three; once he was seen clinging to the pillars of a church altar with his hands,

[1] The doctrine of purgatory, which would have provided a possible answer to this question, had not yet been invented; traces of it may perhaps be found in earlier centuries, but it owes its fuller development to the monastic visions of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh.

while the Imperial Guards pulled him by the legs (551); and by this treatment of a pope the emperor seriously imperilled his new-gotten hold on Western Europe. In 553 a General Council was called at Constantinople, which declared itself to be the fifth of the great General Councils, and hoped to lay at rest for ever all questions which divided or might ever divide East from West. Vigilius refused to preside in this council, was anathematised by it, retracted his opposition, retracted his retractation, and was sent to Sicily, where he died. His successor Pelagius also shuffled on the same points, though he took care to keep his body out of the Imperial clutch. But he gave way enough to satisfy Justinian, and made the condemnation of the Three part of the orthodox creed of Catholic Christendom. It is one of the very few instances in history before the Reformation in which the State ever triumphed over the Church—and, oddly enough, the triumph was attained by a State, as it seems to us, thoroughly in the wrong over a Church in the right; by a State outbigoting and outanathematising the Church of Rome itself. In one corner of Italy, and that no unimportant one, the great diocese of Aquileia, whose See after the Hunnish sack had been removed to Grado, the bishops long refused to receive the decrees of Pope Pelagius, and even went into schism on the matter.

After all, our final judgment on Justinian and his reign must be conditioned by the view which we take of his financial administration. Had he or had he not drained Southern Europe of its resources? Most historians take the view that he had done so. It is therefore with great diffidence that I venture to suggest to my readers one or two considerations on the other side. In the first place the cost of his Western wars, though they lasted twenty years, may have been very much overestimated. His armies were very small and very ill-paid; brutally but honestly he told Belisarius in his second campaign against the Goths that the State would contribute nothing to it, and apparently he kept his word. Moreover, the amount of hoarded treasure taken from Vandals and Goths, of which the Government

must at least have got some share, was enormous; the part played by hoarded treasure in any unsettled state of a once rich society is sure to be great, and was then very great; we find Frank kings fighting each other for no other object than to lay hands on each other's 'treasure'; armies move about accompanied by van-loads of 'treasure.' In the second place it is very difficult for men to realise that for good and orderly government they must pay, and pay heavily. It is better to pay very heavily indeed than to be skinned alive by pirates; but most nations fail to realise this even to-day. The old Roman Empire crumbled to pieces because men would not, or said they could not pay. In the fifth century they did not pay—whether they could or no, is another matter—and the results were Alaric, Attila, and Genseric. The success, such as it was, of the small weak kingdoms of the Middle Ages rested on the fact that there was no direct taxation in them at all. Machiavelli, right as usual in his estimate of motives, said 'men forget the death of their fathers, but not the loss of their patrimony.' Before I condemned Justinian as an exorbitant tax-gatherer, I should want to know the incidence per head of the peoples he ruled, of the amount he levied; and this we have no means whatever of ascertaining.

If, however, you asked me whether the conquest of Italy was in itself a wise policy, I should unhesitatingly say no. Such a shrewd statesman ought, even if he destroyed the Vandals, to have made a firm alliance with the Goths and strengthened them by every means in his power; he ought to have considered them as the best counterpoise against the Franks, and both Frank and Goth as bulwarks of Western civilisation against Avars and Slavs. He ought to have spent every penny he raised in driving the latter unspeakable ruffians behind the Danube, or exterminating them for ever. Even Chosroes and his Persians were gentlemen compared to the human deluge which was going to sweep over the Balkans during the next hundred years.

Whatever may be our judgment on Justinian, it is clear that, the instant he was dead in 565, his people re-

fused to bear the strain of his taxes for an hour, and that there was no one to take up his task of making them bear it. His successor was his nephew Justin II., already married to a niece of Theodora, a virago who governed him absolutely. Justin was well received in the palace, but, at his first entry into the circus, an universal yell arose for the liberation of the prisoners and the mitigation of the taxes of the late Government. A similar cry seems to have been raised in Jerusalem on the death of King Solomon; and it may not be altogether fanciful to draw a parallel between Justinian and the famous King of the Jews, who also (perhaps) strained the resources of his kingdom beyond what they could bear, and whose power crumbled before a popular outcry the instant he was dead.[1] Justin gave way at once, and his weak compliance really profited as little as Rehoboam's firm refusal to comply, for all the external enemies of the Empire sprang upon it at once, the Persian the first. The Persian war continued through the next three reigns, brought the Asiatics at last to the shores of the Bosphorus, and fatally weakened the Greek chance of resisting the still more terrible Mahometans. At once also the disturbances in the Balkan lands, long averted by the gold and diplomacy of Justinian, broke out and assumed fearful proportions.

Anything like a satisfactory solution of that Balkan problem was beyond the power of the Empire of the sixth and following centuries. Three separate races, all in a very barbarous condition, were already tossing and goring each other in the provinces which lay to the south of the Danube. There were (1) the Avars, a Turanian stock akin to the Huns;[2] (2) the Lombards, a very old German stock, whom Tacitus mentions as lying in his time between

[1] History has generally been written by champions of revolts (when these revolts have been successful), and has been coloured by their prejudices; it has often occurred to me that if we had an account of the first year of the reign of Rehoboam from some loyalist who had served that king's father faithfully, we might be inclined to take a different view of the Revolution which split the kingdom of David.

[2] Paul the Deacon, the Lombard historian, writing at the end of the eighth century, calls them the 'Avars or Huns.'

the Elbe and the Weser, but who had long been nomadic on the banks of the Danube; (3) the Slavs or Slavonians, of Aryan race indeed but, then as now, vilest and least civilisable of all Aryans. These last never acted as a tribe or moved under any one leader or any tribal impulse; they were mere wandering robbers, attaching themselves, now to one now to another of their more united neighbours, and, in the frequent quarrels of these, often walking off with the spoil. You could fight, or you could hire, or you could allot lands or pay money to the tribe of Lombards or the tribe of Avars, and, though they usually broke faith with you, they at least did it as a tribe; but with Slavs you could do nothing; when you touched them they broke in pieces like the fragments in the kaleidoscope, and then filtered in through every crack and cranny in your defence-line. Worse, still, they Slavonicised other peoples who had nominal dominion over them. In the sixth and seventh centuries they slipped through, in an infinite number of driblets, into Hellas itself; they took no cities but they formed peasant communities in the open country, and it is quite possible that there is a large element of Slavonic blood in the modern Greeks.

Justinian, who always contemplated the possibility of an irruption of Franks to the south-east, had favoured and paid both Avars and Lombards as possible counterpoises to them. Both the latter tribes at his death seem to have been dwelling, though in a most unsettled condition, in Pannonia and Noricum, and perhaps occasionally poking their noses across the Julian Alps. They were in perpetual conflict with the Gepids, who had recently grabbed a good deal of land on the river Save. When things got very bad, the 'Roman' population of these provinces used to take shelter in the carefully walled towns. The Lombards had, as we said, sent a contingent to help Narses against the Goths; but it behaved so badly that after his victory he had to dismiss it from Italy with a strong escort. Now Justin, being unable or unwilling to make his subjects pay for being defended, was obliged to withdraw the annual subsidies both from Lombards and Avars. The former at

once flew in force at the Gepids, polished them off in 567, and then set their faces in the direction of Thrace. The Avars followed suit, and wiped out the Imperial garrisons on the Great Eastern Road; and it looked for a moment like a race between them for the plunder of the Imperial capital. Then suddenly, we know not how, they came to an agreement; 'You Lombards shall evacuate the whole of Pannonia and Noricum to us Avars, and you shall go to Italy yourselves.' The Franks must have been in the swim with them, or at least must have made no protest, for the Lombard king, Alboin, had married a Frankish princess.

Poor Italy was again to be the scene of a human deluge. Narses, who as 'patrician' was valiantly upholding the Roman name at Ravenna, was snubbed by, and recalled to Constantinople, perhaps because he remonstrated against the remission of taxation; and of course the story ran that he, in his rage, invited the Lombards to Italy. There is no good evidence for this, and it is of itself most unlikely. But he was utterly unsupported by his government and died at Rome, without revisiting the East, in 573. Italy was thus undefended and unprepared. The story of the Lombard invasion has no adequate contemporary historian, but it has a historian of Lombard race, Paul the Deacon, who wrote two centuries later, after the fall of his own people, a most spirited and delightful history of them down to 744; a history that for life and 'go' may almost be paralleled to Froissart's. Of course a man who tells you that 375,000 Saracens were killed at the battle of Poitiers is not to be trusted as to figures; but, then, neither is any mediæval chronicler to be trusted. Paul knew Italy and Gaul[1] well, and was for some time a favourite at the Court of the great Frank sovereign, Charlemagne. He ended his days at the monastery of Monte Cassino, which the Lombards had first burned and then, when they became pious, had restored. With the partial exception of the Gothic historian Jordanes, Paul is

[1] Paul used Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*, as a source for his account of the Franks, until that book ends with the year 591.

the only writer who takes us back into the domain of 'Saga,' and tells of the sojourn of his heathen ancestors on the Baltic shore, in the days when

> Out of the morning land
> Over the snow-drifts
> Beautiful Freya came
> Tripping to Scoring.

The Lombards were mighty strong men. Amalungus, a seventh-century hero, once spitted a 'certain little Greek' on his spear, in one of the wars near Benevento, lifted him wriggling from his saddle and raised him over his own head, 'which terrified the Greek army so that it fled.' Also King Cunincpert, when a boy, was able to lift a big sheep by its wool and hold it out at arm's length, 'which,' said his rival sadly, 'I could not do.' When and how the Lombards were converted to the Arian form of Christianity we cannot be sure. St Michael was their official patron, though Paul admits that St John the Baptist also did much for them. Paul, of course, in the deep Catholic piety of Monte Cassino, calls an Arian 'a heathen.' Certainly, when they now invaded Italy in 568, his people slew priests and burned churches; but then they had auxiliaries with them from many other tribes, some of whom may have been real heathens. Afterwards their Arianism was not so stubborn as that of the Goths, for we soon begin to hear of sporadic conversions of Lombards to Catholicism. One important result of the Westward march of this people must be noticed, namely, that with them the last serious Teutonic stock left the Near East for good, and so left the Balkan lands a prey to races incapable of absorbing civilisation. It was not to be supposed that the Avars would rest content with Pannonia and Noricum; they would soon push south-eastwards again, they and the still more dreadful Bulgarians, of whom we now begin to hear. And, even if the Avars could be beaten back, the Slavs who accompanied them would be found remaining, like the dirty silt left by a great tidal wave. But it is to Italy that we must now again look.

The Lombard army seems to have been small, but it was swelled with contingents of Franks and Saxons. Like the Goths, Alboin's men were born horsemen, and fought with lance and sword and in heavy armour; but, unlike them, they had a race of hereditary nobility of some sort, as well as a large stock of non-noble freemen. The royal power was not nearly so strong as that of Theodoric had been. The conquest was a much more cruel one than the Gothic, each 'Duke' of the Lombards plundering and slaying pretty much on his own account. Many leading Italians were actually killed, many more deprived of their property; all were made to pay one-third of their produce to some Lombard 'guest,' who was apparently quartered on them.[1] Yet, as in the case of the Goths, it might be misleading to speak of any regular settlement of the conquerors on the land of the conquered; there was certainly plenty of land-grabbing, but probably no finality in it. As for defence of North Italy, there seems to have been hardly any until Pavia was reached in 569, and it is quite possible that the few remaining Goths joined the Lombards. Padua and Cremona were not taken for some years, the dates of the fall of Piacenza and Mantua are doubtful, while Genoa, with the Ligurian coast, held out almost till the middle of the seventh century.[2] Pavia stood a three years' siege, and, when taken in the last year of King Alboin (572), became his capital. While this long siege was going on, Lombard arms penetrated far to the centre and south of Italy; the great strategical point on the Flaminian road, between Rome and Ravenna, called Petra Pertusa, was mastered by the Lombards; but the gallant resistance of Perugia, enabled another road to be kept open. Probably the walls of most cities in the interior had been badly knocked about in the Gothic wars and not rebuilt; and, even where

[1] I have purposely avoided stating that a similar arrangement was made by the soldiers of Odoacer in 476, by the Gothic settlers in Gaul (419) and Italy (492) because, though this is the 'received view' and very probably true, there seems to me no actual proof of it.

[2] Professor Bury in his edition of Gibbon (v., 518) gives a list of the probable dates of these conquests.

walls were strong, hunger would compel the gates to be opened. But the great coast fortresses were on the whole safe. Naples the Lombards never took, and Ravenna only on the eve of the extinction of their own power; though they did at least once take the port of Ravenna, called Classis, they soon lost it again.

Their first siege of Rome was in 573, and there were numerous other attacks on the city down to the middle of the eighth century; sometimes from the kings, sometimes from the almost independent dukes. The country round Rome, which in the seventh century will be called the 'Duchy of Rome,' was wasted by Lombard fire and sword; but from the actual walls of the city the barbarians were either repelled, or terrified away, or more often bought off by gold supplied with noble liberality by the riches of the bishop. Once, indeed, the emperor managed to send a supply of corn up the Tiber, and occasionally we hear of a Byzantine Duke or *Magister Militum* conducting the defence; we even see the germs of a city militia manning the walls. But on a whole the popes, and especially the great Pope Gregory I. (590-604) are the protagonists in the defence, and increase their own power and influence enormously thereby. Plague and famine stalked in the train of Lombard armies; and, as from the hands of the rich Pope alone relief could come, so even plague and famine helped to strengthen his power. Superstition strengthened it too. The plague of Gregory's first year of rule was heralded by an inundation of the Tiber, worse than that described in Horace's second Ode; for down the river and through Rome came a multitude of serpents and a dragon of astonishing size, and passed out to sea. And when the plague was stayed, it was because St Michael himself with a drawn sword in his hand came and stood on the top of Hadrian's mausoleum. He stands there still.

The weak point in the Lombards was that they would not submit to central government. A futile king called Cleph followed Alboin, and on Cleph's death there was an interregnum of ten years; some people speak of as many

as thirty-six independent dukes of the Lombards at one time, and these often wasted their strength by foolish raids across the Western Alps, which had no effect but to found an age-long feud with the Franks.

A strong Roman emperor would have turned this state of things to good account. But Justin was quite unable to succour Italy, for the Avars were eating the Balkan Peninsula in large bites, and his Persian wars were going badly; Dara had fallen. In 578 he died, having ruined in thirteen years all Justinian's work, and his successor, who bore the honoured name of Tiberius II., did something to improve matters. Then in 582 came a hero of old Roman family and character called Maurice who, as general, had already begun to make head against the Persians; had Tiberius or Maurice succeeded Justinian immediately there might have been real hope for the Empire. It is to Maurice that the learned German historian Dr Hartmann[1] attributes, perhaps on slender evidence, a real attempt to organise the defence of such parts of Italy as had not yet fallen to the Lombards. Narses had been followed by a weak patrician called Longinus, who had been shut up in Ravenna and straitened by the capture of its port, Classis; but the Lombards lost Classis again under their next king, Autharis (elected 584). The Pope cried aloud to Maurice for help, but, even in crying, allowed the emperor to see how ill Italians brooked the rule of Constantinople, especially how ill Rome brooked being governed by deputy from Ravenna. Maurice paid little head to these insinuations, and sent a vigorous military governor called Smaragdus as 'exarch' to Ravenna. Africa was already under the rule of an exarch, and henceforth till 750 the territory round Ravenna is called an 'exarchate.' Certainly from this time onwards we do find that, if there is a Byzantine governor in any Italian province at all, his office is rather military than civil; and it may have been in this century, and in consequence of such a change, that the last traces of municipal self-government disappeared from the Italian

[1] *Geschichte Italiens im Mittelalter*, ii. 1. 125 *sqq.*

cities. The question is an important one, and must be more fully discussed at a later date; for on the answer to it will depend the possibility of affiliating the Italian 'Republics' of the later Middle Ages to the old Roman *municipia*.

Smaragdus, indeed, recovered Classis from the Lombards in 588, and did his very best to co-operate with the Pope; but in 589 he was removed, and Romanus, who was perhaps not so conciliatory, took his place. Maurice's other step for the defence of Italy was not such a wise one, for he endeavoured to buy Frankish help. The Frank was, however, the most unsatisfactory of allies; he took your cash, he came, and then plundered your friends rather than your foes. So did King Childebert, the East Frank, in 585; bribed by Maurice to come in, he was again bribed by Autharis to go out; and no doubt he made a third purse for himself out of the province of Venetia, which he wasted. He came again in several successive years, but in 588 suffered a heavy defeat from the Lombard king. Paul the Deacon evidently regards Autharis as having been a fine spirited fellow who, if he had lived longer, would have done great things for the Lombard monarchy; during his six years' reign (he died in 590) he hammered rebellious dukes, invading Franks, and such Roman cities as resisted him, with some success; as we have just seen, he reduced the Ravennese governor to great straits. Above all he married the good and beautiful Theodelinda, a Bavarian princess, descended on her mother's side from the Lombard kings; and she, a Catholic and a *protégée* of Gregory, soon to be Pope, began to tame her husband's wild subjects. When Autharis died in 590 she carried her crown to, or was carried off with her crown by a certain Duke Agilulf, who reigned valiantly till 615. He too was a terror to rebel dukes, and luckily for him the Franks let him alone, for they were devouring each other in civil war during his whole reign.

In that same year (590) Gregory I., the true founder alike of the Papal monarchy and of the spiritual claims of the Papacy, became Pope. Leo I., the greatest of his

predecessors, had no doubt pointed out the path, and had played towards the Huns much of the part that Gregory played towards the Lombards, and even with more success. But in the middle of the fifth century the Empire was a more serious power, and the Papacy a much weaker power than at the end of the sixth. In Leo's time, even in the West, misery, superstition and terror did not wholly dominate society; in Gregory's they did, and he built fearlessly on their foundations.

Gregory was born about 540, of noble Roman lineage, though perhaps not of the Anician house as has been alleged, and he died of gout, aggravated by his extreme asceticism, at the age of sixty-four, having reigned at the Lateran only for fourteen years. He had been prefect of the city during the first Lombard siege, and had endeared himself to all Romans by his generous use of his own private fortune. Two years later he became a monk, and graduated in the school of self-torment which the age regarded as the ideal of holiness. He was the favourite of two successive popes, and was ambassador at Constantinople from 579 to 585, although how he got on in that capacity, considering that he knew no Greek, does not appear. He regarded Constantinople with the true old-fashioned hatred of the Roman patrician; and this hatred was aggravated by the fact that a certain John (called *Jejunator*, 'the Faster'), as ascetic as himself, became Patriarch of the Eastern capital during his sojourn in it. This John was foolish enough ('wicked enough,' said Gregory, 'a mere precursor of Antichrist') to assume the title of 'Œcumenical Patriarch'—which in plain English means 'Bishop of the World'—a title already borne by several previous patriarchs but since dropped. In 590 the universal honour and love of the Roman people carried Gregory to the Papal chair, an elevation for which he professed to feel himself totally unfitted; that there had never lived a man more absolutely fitted for it, no one knew better than Gregory, whose whole life had been a preparation for it. As well in his boundless charity to the poor, his wise and statesmanlike administration of his vast estates (whose income has been computed

as even then over £300,000 a year), his missionary and evangelical zeal, his utter fearlessness, his passion for monasticism; as well, alas also, in his gross superstition, his vandalism towards classic art and learning, his infamous behaviour towards the Emperor Maurice, and his spiritual arrogance, he is the herald of the coming ages.

If we first consider his attitude towards the Lombards, we shall see that it is inseparable from his attitude to the emperor. From 590 to 595 Constantinople is in the most imminent danger from the Avars, and Maurice is on the defensive; once the enemy gets as far as Thessalonica, then gradually the tide turns, and by the end of the reign the Avars are pushed back to and over the Danube. At first Gregory is all smiles and flattery to Maurice, till he sees how the Avar campaign will turn out; but he keeps up a running fire of complaint against the Exarch Romanus (589-97), who is fighting valiantly against the Lombards. From the first one fears that Gregory is dreaming of an independent Italy, under his own spiritual hegemony, with converted Lombards dancing to the Roman pipe. He spares no pains to work upon his dear 'daughter,' as he calls Queen Theodelinda for this purpose, and even Agilulf lets his son be baptised a Catholic. But, alas, Agilulf does not desist, still less do the two independent Lombard dukes, at Spoleto to the north and Benevento to the south of Rome, desist from aggression. Their duchies hold Rome as it were in a nut-cracker, and their rulers are fond of giving a squeeze. There are other duchies in the north at Friuli, Ivrea and Turin, all to some extent what later history will call 'Marks' or border defences against some external foe, and all making for provincialism and disunion in Italy. Only a slender strip of Imperial territory runs between Rome and Ravenna; if Perugia should fall (and it is often besieged) this will be cut. Gregory in fact often feels himself to be between the devil and the deep sea. The Catholic devil is indeed far away at Constantinople, and his own regions are sulphurous with Avars and Persians; but if he were to recover strength? And then he has a Vice-devil at Ravenna, in

the person of the exarch, who sends help to, or withholds help from Rome according to some foolish 'plan of strategy' of his own. And all the while the deep sea of the Arian Lombards is surging wave after wave over the roads of Italy, and yet refusing to combine itself in one channel, into which a pope might build out a mole of Catholic safety —and perhaps of papal hegemony. Now it is the Duke of Spoleto, now it is the king from Pavia that menaces Rome itself; Gregory constantly has to provide soldiers for the defence of outlying posts as well as for the city, and to pay them out of the papal purse. Even for Naples he once has to provide soldiers. 'Are not events,' he might fairly argue, 'driving me to assume a position of sovereignty in spite of my loyalty to the Empire?'. Where defence is concerned he has no scruples; 'let no one in our name or that of the Church,' he orders, 'excuse himself from manning the walls of Terracina' (598). Yet he had just been scolding Maurice fearfully for an edict which forbade soldiers to shirk their duty by becoming monks. Gradually his thoughts turn towards a peace with the Lombards, and then his attitude to Maurice is, 'I could easily make peace with them if it were not for that scoundrel of an exarch' —who in fact was retaking a lot of posts on the Flaminian Way. The pope does conclude a separate peace with the Duke of Spoleto in 592; Maurice is naturally very angry, and orders Romanus to break it, for Ravenna, alas, is more important to the Empire than Rome. In his scolding, Maurice had unfortunately called Gregory a fool (*fatuus*); it was the last straw to the proud Roman, who never forgave it.

Romanus, however, died in 598, and the next Exarch Callinicus deserved the name *fatuus* for himself. For though he got on better with Gregory, and allowed the latter to mediate a regular peace between himself and Agilulf (599), he wantonly broke it two years afterwards, and brought on all the Lombard trouble again. The peace of 599, however, began to mark an epoch; the Empire therein gave up all hope of conquering the Lombards, and recognised that they had come to stay in

Italy; the policy of Justinian was over for good. It was a great and deserved triumph for Gregory, and might have led to a reconciliation with Maurice, but for that impertinent title of 'Œcumenical Patriarch' being openly flaunted by the Faster John at Constantinople. Gregory in 595 insisted that it must be given up, and Maurice, who by this time ought, as a statesman, to have measured the strength of his adversary better, refused to coerce John; and so the breach widened yearly. Gregory did not know that in less than a century (682) his own Roman successors would lay themselves open to his denunciation ('precursors of Antichrist') by pretensions even more lofty than John's.

So when the crash came at Constantinople there was no one who sang more jubilantly than the Pope of Rome. In 601 the victorious army of Constantinople, which had been ordered to stay in winter quarters on the Danube to guard against a return of the Avars, mutinied, marched back to the capital under the lead of a vulgar Cappadocian colonel called Phocas, threw itself into the arms of the turbulent 'Green Faction' of the arena, deposed Maurice, and hailed Phocas as emperor (602). A perfect carnival of bloodshed was inaugurated by this monster, Maurice and all his family being among the first victims. Phocas went on to conclude a shameful peace with the Avars, allowing them to settle where they pleased and to rob as they pleased, and another with the Lombards. He would have done the same with the Persians; but the latter preferred to remain at war, and, for twenty years to come, spread all over the Roman East, for half that time almost unchecked. But as a set-off to all this, the pious, glorious, and ever august Phocas at once compelled the new patriarch to renounce the offending title; and Gregory, in return, lay down and licked his bloodstained boots with the most loathsome flattery.

The year 602 is therefore a mighty epoch in the history of the world. A slender hold is kept by the Empire, which still calls itself Roman, on the exarchate of Ravenna, the 'Duchy' of Rome, and some ports in Southern Italy; but for the rest, as nineteenth-century patriots used to sing,

'*Italia farà da se.* How she will fare depends less upon herself than upon the now practically independent Papacy. And, on the whole, the rest of the Western children of the Roman Empire will 'fare of themselves' also.

It is pleasant to turn from Gregory the diplomatist and schemer, and to remember that this same Gregory was also the man who made the beautiful Roman liturgy what it is to-day, who introduced the simple and beautiful Gregorian chants to churches, who cared incessantly for the outcast and the fallen, who re-started on the estates of the Church the practices of husbandry, stock-raising, and horse-breeding, who scrutinised his rent-rolls continually, and fell like a thunderbolt on all unjust or harsh stewards. The arm of St Peter, when wielded by a Gregory, was mighty enough to afford shelter to any landowner who would become a tenant of the Church, and many men must have been only too glad to surrender such freedom as Gothic, Greek and Lombard wars had left them, in order to enjoy that protection. Again it is pleasant to see Gregory's zeal for the conversion of the English race; it was he who, as we all know, despatched St Augustine to the King of Kent. It was Gregory too who, before he became pope, had set on foot the conversion of the Arian Visigoths, and their King Reccared to Catholicism, and whose careful supervision of the Church in Spain gave it such power in the centuries to come; it was Gregory, who, together with Queen Theodelinda, incessantly worked for the conversion of the Lombards and really began it. As for the Catholic Franks he was rather less successful in his attempts to introduce order and moral life into their wild and turbulent realm, which was yet so full of promise for the future. Whatever he was not, he was unquestioned Patriarch of the West; the first 'Pope' in the sense in which that title, hitherto occasionally given to other bishops, clave from henceforth only to the occupant of the Roman See. But a man must not be too far ahead of his age if he is to lead it successfully; Gregory was steeped and soaked in relic-worship, in belief that (childish and profane) 'miracles' were being worked every day and all round him, even when they

were obviously plagiarised from many of the miracles recorded in the Old Testament. Though he could write very vigorous and very fairly classical Latin, he openly said that it was ridiculous for a good Christian to care about the niceties of grammar.[1] There is no contemporary evidence for the twelfth-century story of his having burned the Palatine Library, which moreover was unquestionably the property of the emperor, and was probably removed to Constantinople, unless, as is quite possible, it had been destroyed in the Gothic wars; but we may well believe that he would have been profoundly indifferent at, or even rejoiced over the destruction of what he would have called 'heathen trash.' There is even less evidence for the story, over which pious monks gloated in the fourteenth century, that he mutilated the few ancient statues left in Rome; some of these statues had indeed been hurled upon the assailant Goths as missiles during the sieges.

[1] It would be difficult to overestimate the influence on the Mediæval Church of Gregory's writings, such as the *Regula Pastoralis*, the *Dialogues* (one of the 'good books' which our Alfred had translated into Anglo-Saxon), the *Morals*, and the *Homilies*. It was he, more than anyone else, who taught reverence for the 'letter' of the Scriptures, and taught also that each 'letter' should be interpreted allegorically.

ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER V

The TIME covered is very roughly the sixth and seventh centuries.

The SUBJECT is an examination of the conditions of life in Gaul (or France), Spain, and Italy during these centuries, under the new kingships of the Merovingian Franks, Visigoths, and Lombards respectively. The kingdom of the Burgundians disappears in 534, and is merged in that of the Franks, who, beginning from Northern Gaul in the fifth century, perpetually fight the Visigoths for Southern Gaul, and at last confine them to Spain and to a narrow strip of Gaul on the Mediterranean. These Franks are strong Catholics; most of their neighbours remain Arians, which gives them an excuse for fighting them. There are also fierce civil wars between the various Frank sovereigns; but the Merovingian race rapidly wears itself out, and all power passes into the hands of a succession of 'Mayors of the Palace,' out of whom will come, in the eighth century, the next race of Frankish kings, the Caroling. Meanwhile in Spain the Gothic kings, who remain Arians till 586, do, with some exceptions, steadily lose power to their great nobles; in the seventh century their Church is fiercely Catholic. Very little is known of the last Christian-Gothic kings of Spain, who are overthrown by the Moors, 711. In Italy, of which only the seventh century history is here treated, the popes are weak, and are in continual conflict with the Lombard kings and dukes, most of whom are Arians almost till the end of the seventh century; the popes are also in conflict with the 'Roman' emperors at Constantinople, and with their deputies, the 'Exarchs' of Ravenna.

The principal ACTORS are:—

(1) The race of the Merovingian Frankish kings from

CLOVIS, 481-511.
He divides his kingdom among his four Sons, of whom
CLOTHAIR I.,
reunites it all, 548, and dies 561.
He again divides kingdom between several sons,
but the only two of importance are

Continued on next page.

CLOTHAIR I.—*Continued.*

SIGEBERT, dies 575.
Marries Brunhilda
(who dies 613).

Theudebert,
King of East Franks
(534-548),
is grandson of Clovis
by another son.

CHILPERIC, dies 584.
Marries Fredegonda
(who dies 597).

CLOTHAIR II.,
reunites whole kingdom,
613,
and dies 628.

DAGOBERT I.,
rules whole kingdom,
and dies 638.

After him the names of the very numerous kings do not matter;
they have no power, and the last of them is
CHILDERIC III.,
deposed by Pippin in 751.

(2) The only important kings of the Visigoths in Spain and Southern Gaul during this period are:—

ALARIC II., 485-507, who marries a daughter of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, and is killed by Clovis.
ATHANAGILD, 554-567.
LEOVIGILD, 568-586, who destroys the Suevic kingdom in Spain, and fixes his capital at Toledo instead of Toulouse.
RECCARED I., 586-601, who turns Catholic.
KINDASWINTHA, 641-652.
WITIZA, or perhaps RODERICK, who is overthrown by the Moors in 711.

(3) The only important kings of the Lombards in this period are:—

ALBOIN, 561-573, conquers N. Italy, 568.
AUTHARIS, 584-590.
AGILULF, 590-615.
ROTHARIS, 636-652.
GRIMOALD, 662-671.
LIUTPRAND, 713-744. See also Table to Chapter VI.

(4) For the rulers of Constantinople in the seventh century, who are mentioned in this chapter, see Table to Chapter VI.

CHAPTER V

THE NEW NATIONS

FACIES non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen—

I SHOULD like to be able to finish Ovid's line and to say that the aspect of the new nations was 'such as sisters should have,' but few of us would like our sisters to have the manners or the morals of the seventh century, which is for Western Europe perhaps the darkest and dreariest of all ages since the beginning of recorded history. There are no good chroniclers between the death of Gregory of Tours at the end of the sixth, and the appearance of Paul the Deacon at the end of the eighth century. There are no great popes in the seventh century, and no really great emperors; but their absence does not make the relations between Rome and Constantinople any more friendly, while every attempt at religious peace, every *via media* devised by the Eastern theologians, is contemptuously rejected as a fresh 'heresy' by the Western Church. Visigothic Spain has indeed turned Catholic, and Lombard Italy is gradually turning; when it has turned Arianism will be as good as dead. But Italy is as far off from union as ever; the triple pretensions of pope, emperor, and Lombard king are mutually incompatible. Spain is indeed the happier for her religious peace, and gets thereby a racial union earlier than any child of Rome except Gaul; but there are other causes at work to weaken her, which we shall have to discuss later. In Britain the strife of the conquerors *inter se* has succeeded to the destruction of the relics of Roman civilisation; but the conversion to Christianity has begun and proceeds rapidly,

and the north of England, at least, seems to be better off than any other part of the old Empire. There is life and there is literature in Northumbria, and still more in totally un-Roman Ireland and Iona, when, except in Italy,[1] there is none to speak of further South. Gaul, at the first glance, seems to be the worst off of all; its history is one long tangle of civil war, godlessness and rapine.

And, suddenly, on a Christendom thus divided and self-destructive, there bursts from the deserts of Arabia the armed message of Islam. How can it be met and answered?

Before we proceed to discuss that message and the answer of Christendom to it, we must try to discover what was the condition of the populations, both in town and country, of the several nations which were taking shape in the West; what Roman institutions survived, what took the place of those that perished. In Gaul and Gaul alone it is possible for us to learn something of this; but perhaps we may conjecture that in Spain and Italy the conditions of life were not wholly dissimilar to those in Gaul. I shall ask you therefore for a time rather to forget chronology and the names of kings, and to take a peep into Gaul at the close of the sixth century as shown to us in the History of Gregory of Tours. It is there that we shall best discover how much is old and how much is new, what is barbarised Roman, what is the strength of willing-to-be-Romanised barbarism. Gaul, whether we call it Gaul, Frankland or France, is a good country to study, for in no country has the continuity of life been so unbroken. No country has so few internal barriers; no country is now so homogeneous, yet none has so readily absorbed external elements of civilisation, from South, from North, and above all from East; it has been well pointed out that all the continent is France's 'hinterland.' And on every

[1] In many of the Italian cities it seems probable that the municipal schools never wholly ceased from teaching throughout the Dark Ages; to these secular schools were added, in the sixth century, that of Monte Cassino and other monasteries. Probably Rome itself was worse off than any other city in this respect.

element she has absorbed she has stamped her own very ancient hall-mark; the typical Frenchman is still that precocious fellow *le Gaulois*, and France is the most precocious country of Europe in its people as in its climate.

Now the Frank conquerors of Northern Gaul—and Clovis the first of them—had this advantage over other Teutonic colonists of the Empire, that their Catholicism enabled them simply to step into the place of the Roman governors, and that their Gallo-Roman subjects saw no difficulty in accepting them as such; this, as we learned above, was not the case in those parts of Gaul which were conquered by Burgundians or by Visigoths. From the very first the Frank kings were thoroughly accepted by the all-powerful bishops, and this meant much to them. It seems probable that, at the conversion to Christianity, the bishop in each Gallic *civitas* had stepped into the place of the official *defensor civitatis*, and also had replaced the *flamen* (official priest) as 'head of society.' As the Roman *curiæ* and tribunals died out, or changed their shapes

into something poor and strange,

the bishops would begin to act as administrators and judges. These were the men to teach their barbarian masters how to work a kingdom after the Roman model, or what they could remember of it. In the fifth and sixth centuries the bishops were far more administrators than they were theologians; which was a great change since the fourth century, when St Martin had preached and Hilary of Poitiers had fought the theological battle for Athanasius against the Emperor Constantius. And so the bishops became the principal courtiers and advisers of the new kings.

The fact that Theodoric had driven the Franks back from Southern Gaul was another important advantage; it led them to consolidate their power and unite their peoples in the North. The frequent divisions of the Frankish kingdom made far less difference to this consolidation than you would suppose; none of the divisions were really permanent, though that into Neustria (the West) and

Austrasia (the East, reaching often far into Germany), tended to be so. But there were as frequent reunions of the whole under one sovereign, who would then at once take up the task of conquering southwards or eastwards. Such was the case with Clothair I. in the sixth, and Clothair II. and Dagobert I. in the seventh century. We can even see early traces of Paris as a capital city; no doubt it owed its riches to its being such a good centre for the exchange of goods by water; once (567) it is reckoned too important a place to be allotted to any one of three partitioners of the kingdom; and each king gets a district in it and a special church to keep up. But Tours is the 'Holy Place'; for it contains the tomb of the blessed St Martin, in his great basilica, built in 472 and restored by Bishop Gregory (the chronicler) a hundred years later.[1] St Martin was a real man, of Pannonian birth, who had served in the Roman army, preached over all Central Gaul, and died in 397. Later kings of France reckoned 'Abbot of St Martin at Tours' among their proudest titles. The devotion of the immediate descendants of Clovis to St Martin, and to the Church in general, was boundless, and quite independent of their very remarkable set of morals. Geographically also Tours was of great importance, a meeting-place of many roads, the starting-point for that journey to the south (through the gap of Poitiers) which led the speech of Northern France, the *Langue d'oil*, to prevail over that of Southern Gaul, the *Langue d'oc*. It was this pilgrims' road which, as leading to the shrine of Santiago di Compostella, got the name of the *Chemin de Saint Jacques*.

It is not often that one has the history of a country written by one of its leading nobles and ecclesiastical statesmen, but this is the case with Bishop Gregory's *Historia Francorum*. Families like his, of Gallo-Roman descent, seem to have had an almost hereditary right to the episcopate, as they had had to the civil posts under

[1] Gregory modelled his Church on that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, with the Saint's tomb in the centre of a large *rotunda*, so that pilgrims could have easy access to it.

the Empire. His grandfather, a contemporary of Clovis, had been 'Count,' *i.e.*, administrator, of the *civitas* of Autun for forty years before he became Bishop of Langres in 486, and ended, as many of these bishops did, by becoming a sort of second-class saint. The tenth-century chronicler of Rheims, Flodoard, speaks of our author himself as 'Saint Gregory of Tours.'[1] Gregory himself held the See of Tours from 573 till his death in 594, and closed his chronicle only a year or two before his death. His real value lies, not in the wars and the kings whom he describes, but in the sidelights which he gives us on the society of his day. His ignorance and credulity are amazing; but his insight is also great and shrewd. If he writes 'rustic' Latin, it is, as he says, because he wants to be read He is no theologian, which in the age of monophysite controversy is a blessing.

Yet he is a churchman of churchmen. Anything short of the complete independence of the Church seems dreadful to him; though he is often sadly obliged to admit that the pious Frank kings too often attacked, deprived, banished, and even mishandled his fellow-bishops. Even for himself the help of St Martin once had to be called in against the unscrupulous Count Leudastes. Of Justinian's Code he has never heard, but he knows that of Theodosius, and presumably believes it to be in force in Gaul.[2] He says that an educated man should know Virgil and arithmetic; but, when he quotes Virgil, he totally misunderstands the allusion. As for his credulity a few specimens must suffice, but I think they illustrate the age pretty thoroughly. Thus:—

An Arian lady having attempted to poison her mother in sacramental wine, Gregory remarks that, had it been a Catholic Sacrament, it would not have hurt the recipient however deadly the poison.[3]

[1] Flodoard, *Historia Remensis*, iii., 50.

[2] Though he mentions many Frankish customs, he never tells us that such were law for the Franks, while Roman law was administered to Gallo-Romans; yet such we must presume to have been the case.

[3] *Hist. Franc.*, iii., 31.

The Spanish heretics, he says, kept their Easter at a different time from us Catholics; but the miraculous springs, which are well known to fill certain fonts on the day before Easter, kept *our* date even in Spain.[1]

King Gundobald of Burgundy, having heard that a certain Eastern king won all his battles because he had the thumb of St Sergius inserted into his own right arm, sent everywhere to get relics of this martyr, and at last learned that a Syrian, living at Bordeaux, had got a bone of him but would not sell it. Gundobald thereon sent his general Mummolus (a well-known person who played a leading part in sixth-century history) to steal it. Mummolus sent a deacon up a ladder at the Syrian's house while the Syrian was away; and the deacon found a box, in which sure enough was a finger bone of the blessed St Sergius; he let it down by a cord to Mummolus who (perhaps thinking it too large to be inserted whole in the king's arm) began to split it into fragments, which at once disappeared of their own accord, the Martyr not liking that such a man as Mummolus should touch his bones.[2]

There was, however, one abbot in Gaul who was at least a man of sense: a certain novice ('he is still alive so I will not mention his name,' says Gregory) was set to watch a heap of newly threshed wheat.[3] The other monks were all in the fields. The heavens became dark with clouds and, not being able to get the wheat under cover in time, the novice prayed against the storm. Sure enough, the rain fell all around but spared the heap of corn. The brethren arrived just in time to see the miracle which the novice had wrought with his prayers; but the abbot waited till he had finished, and then had him triced up and soundly flogged, with additional fasting to follow; for, said he, 'My son, it is necessary to humble ourselves before the Lord, and not to exult too much in our own miracles and virtues.'[4]

Gregory himself is quite aware that miracle-workers

[1] *Hist. Franc.*, v., 17. [2] *Ibid.*, vii., 31.

[3] *Quære*, against rats and mice? if so, where was the monastery cat? [4] *Hist. Franc.*, iv., 24.

can be frauds: a certain Desiderius from Bordeaux came to Tours while the bishop was away, and pretended to be a medical missionary, specially commissioned by St Peter and St Paul. He got hold of paralytic people and wrenched their joints about with much violence [? massage]; 'and he did cure some, though he killed more. He admitted himself to be inferior as a healer to St Martin, but as good as the apostles. No doubt he was a necromancer and the Devil helped him; but my people found him out and drove him away.'[1]

The instances above given are extreme cases and in a credulous age; but such of my readers as are not familiar with mediæval chroniclers may need to be reminded, first that a like, though not such an extreme credulity was common to all of them at least down to the thirteenth century; and, secondly, that it is on the statements of men who could believe and record such things that almost all our knowledge of the Dark Ages rests. For the sixth and early seventh centuries we have, besides Gregory, his contemporary the Court poet Venantius Fortunatus (530-600), who not only wrote pleasant little verses and a long poem in praise of the blessed St Martin, but also two of the most splendid of Christian hymns, *Pange Lingua* and *Vexilla Regis*. We have a bad Burgundian writer, who is often wrongly called Fredegarius, and who carries the story down to 642; and we have a great many *Lives of Saints*. These last at this early date are often contemporary with the events they describe; for there were not in the Dark Ages any of the formal processes of canonisation or the long years of waiting, which the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Church deemed necessary to establish saintship. A man's own disciple, or a monk of his monastery would simply write his late abbot, or bishop, or brother-monk, into saintship, by recounting the miracles of which he had perhaps been an eyewitness; this became a great source of profit to the abbey which the saint had owned in the flesh and which owned him in the tomb. One of the best

[1] *Hist. Franc.*, ix., 6.

of all the *Lives* is that of the Irish monk St Columbanus, who travelled over all the Frankish realms, founded the great monastery of Luxeuil on the edge of the Vosges mountains, and then wandered off to Italy to catholicise the Lombards, dying at his own foundation of Bobbio in 615.

Besides these sources we have a few edicts extant of the 'first race,' the Merovingian Frankish kings, and 'Capitularies' (or sets of edicts) of their Carolingian successors; we have the old barbarian laws and customs, some of which I have already mentioned, such as the *Lex Salica*, written down in the reign of Clovis, and the *Lex Ripuaria;* we have the attempts at codification such as the *Lex Romana Burgundionum* (about 517), *Lex Romana Visigothorum* ('Breviary of Alaric II.,' the earliest of all, 506); these last are codes intended for the 'Roman' subjects of the new kings. We have some 'Acts' of the very numerous Church councils, and, finally, we have a great many charters and grants of land to individuals or churches. All this material is in Latin, and some of it may have been written by men of Frankish descent. What we have not got is any written record at all of the old Frankish language, although that probably continued to be spoken both east and west of the Rhine for at least two centuries.

From such materials as this it is not impossible to construct some sort of picture of the Gaul or 'Frankland' of the Dark Ages, and it will not greatly matter whether the kingdom in question is the united realm of the Clothairs or Dagobert, or one of the separate lesser kingdoms, into which Gaul between the Rhine and the ocean was oftener broken up. As for 'Germany,' when and so far as its Bavarians, Alamans, Thuringians, Frisians, Saxons were dependent on an East Frankish king who ruled at Metz, it was generally governed by tribal 'dukes' in vassalage to that king, and it was still heathen and unorganised; we must not read the ideas of the eighth and ninth century into the Germany of the sixth and seventh.

Well now, in this Gaul of the sixth and seventh, we can

dimly trace certain remains of Roman institutions, and we can see them all going steadily down hill; losing their grip on the people or being transformed into a feudal shape. Clovis or Clothair I. will perhaps be obeyed as a Roman magistrate; their descendants towards the end of the seventh century will be obeyed only by those who have got attached to them by some personal or semi-feudal tie. For instance, there is a monarchy and it is hereditary and absolute. But the king will normally divide it at his death among his sons, as if it were not a monarchy at all but an estate in land. There is no trace of election; if a king leave no heir, the next strongest king will grab his estate. 'Raising on the shield' is the formal proclamation or installation of the king, to whom all take the old Roman oath of allegiance; he in return does not yet take, as later mediæval kings took, an oath of protection or good government to his subjects. There is no 'contract' between king and people.

This king undoubtedly owns the old Roman *rem fisci*, i.e., the Royal domain within his realm; it is his main source of wealth, and is divided into *fundi* (farms, estates), just as every landowner's property is divided. It is cultivated by families of slaves or families of serfs (*liti*, *læts*)[1] of whom a register is kept; each family has its *mansus* or *casata*, a strip of land sufficient for its support. The *liti* are reckoned as freemen, and will be obliged to serve in the army; but they are not really free, for they cannot quit their *mansus* any more than the slaves. But then neither can they be removed.[2] All such persons will be in the royal *mund* (here is a Frankish word at last), and will enjoy a special protection, with immunity from such 'justice' as the king metes out to his other subjects.

[1] Probably successors of the lesser *coloni*; the latter word is not found in Frankish Gaul.

[2] At least not in theory; but Gregory tells us how King Chilperic, wishing to give his daughter, who was to make a grand marriage in Spain, a worthy following, uprooted whole families from his domain and sent them with her. They wept and howled, and most of them deserted on the southward journey. French people always love their own soil and hate expatriation.

Besides his domain, the king has, or ought to have the old Roman land tax (*tributum*) paid, whether in kind or in cash we do not know, by all free landowners. It ought to be collected by the *curiales* if there were any left to collect it; it ought to be reassessed every fifteen years; yet we have no evidence of this happening at all. But, from the very first, the all-powerful Church set itself, not only against paying any taxes for its own ever-increasing lands, but against the whole principle of taxes. To tax the Church was 'to rob God and his poor,' as Bishop Injuriosus explained to King Clothair; 'if you persist God will take away your kingdom'; and Clothair was so much irritated that he 'left the bishop without even saying good-bye,' but subsequently abandoned his infamous project.[1] In Gregory's book such and such a king 'repents of his taxes'—not of his murders or his adulteries. There is this to be said for the clerical view of the matter:—to a Chilperic or a Childebert taxes meant only so much treasure to be heaped up and squandered in riot, not stuff to be expended for the benefit or defence of his subjects. In short 'taxation is robbery'; the idea was thoroughly familiar to much later centuries, and is by no means dead to-day. Church after church, then, got charters remitting all claim to *tributum*, and laymen followed suit. When the king gave one of his friends a grant of a piece of royal domain he got no taxes out of it, whatever else he may have got, for 'royal domain had never paid.' Probably by the end of the seventh century *tributum* had ceased to produce anything at all, and so the crown got poorer and poorer; and a poor crown is a weak crown.

We must next consider our Frankish king's army. Before all things he is a man of war. Normally he fights Lombards or Visigoths or Germans; often also his own relations, whose lands or wives or cash he covets. Some of his Franks of course enjoy the actual fighting, but the wars are not people's wars at all, they really are

[1] *Hist. Franc.*, iv., 2.

wars of the 'bold bad king,' such as good Radicals still believe all wars to be.[1] Clovis probably took over the Gallo-Roman army, such as it was, officered it with the *élite* of his Franks, and tried to enforce the normal supply of recruits from the Roman landowners; detachments would be quartered and billeted upon particular cities. But in a very few years we find that all distinction of race has vanished, and military service is enforced on all freemen alike; the king calls out the 'counties' nearest the scene of the war, and out the population of each *civitas*, under its count, has to go, untrained, unfed, unpaid, undisciplined, and hence obliged to subsist upon pillage; one vast, glorious, fighting muddle. From the middle of the sixth century the use of cavalry and of defensive armour has come in, but probably only for the few; it is the huge infantry column that still wins Frankish battles down to Carolingian times. Among the bravest fighters the king will choose a personal following for himself, his 'antrustions,' to whom he will probably give lands, and in whom, in the eighth century, we shall find the germ of an hereditary nobility.

Now when he has occasion to do justice or to legislate, it will be these same personal followers whom he will consult, and in Latin, he will call them his *grandes*, his *fideles*, his *optimates*, his *domestici*. Among such, if we could peep into his rude palace, we should probably find several Roman bishops, who will show him how to draft a law. The Codex of Theodosius 'and subsequent amending acts' are still in force, and Latinised Frankish words will always be creeping into the edicts which amend it. What we never can see is on what principle the Salian and Ripuarian laws of the Franks were in force side by side with the Code, and whether there were separate tribunals to administer them; but it is clear that in the cases of Frankish suitors certain of their customs were observed, *e.g.*, the non-inheritance of land by females,

[1] 'Qu'est que c'est que rêvent les rois? C'est de la guerre. Qu'est que c'est que rêvent les peuples? C'est de la paix' (Victor Hugo). Was ever such nonsense written?

the necessity of witnesses to transfers of land,[1] and, worse still, the principle of money payments for crime (*a*) to the injured party (*b*) to the Crown (*c*) to the presiding judge. Now Roman law had steadily whittled away from itself all ideas of 'self-help' against an injury; it had distinguished accurately between crimes against the State and wrongs against an individual. Breach of contract was a wrong, for which the State could make the breaker pay damages; murder was a crime, for which it would kill him. No barbarian law could grasp this apparently simple distinction; it always conceived a 'redemption-price' for crime. At first the injured party might refuse to receive the price and insist on the death of the injurer; at first, too, the price was so high that death was an easier alternative; fifty pounds[2] was almost the lowest *wergild* going. But were these *wergilds* enforced? Here stepped in something equally unknown to Roman law, a set of men called *rachimburgi*, or later *scabini* (in French *échevins*). These were apparently either 'doomsmen' who found the judgment of the court, or assessors, who made some sort of bargain between the murderer and the relatives of the murdered man; in the latter capacity they would know what was a fair payment, and a fair date for payment. They would perhaps accept securities for payment or seize goods to the amount due, or, if the criminal had no friends and no goods, would 'leave him for execution.' In civil suits they acted as witnesses. It is very difficult to see who or what sort of men would sit beside the count as *rachimburgi;* perhaps just the 'important persons' of the district wherein he was holding his court. Do not think of them in the least as a 'jury'; a jury had quite a different origin, but it is easy to see how the later mediæval idea of a jury would affiliate itself to them.

[1] Including children, who are to be slapped and have their ears twisted, that they may remember in after years what they have witnessed.

[2] *I.e.*, one hundred golden *solidi* (shillings), each containing forty silver *denarii* (pennies), and variously estimated at from 8s. 6d. to 10s per *solidus*. Seventy-two *solidi* = a 'pound of gold.'

The kings obviously favoured the whole system of compensation for crimes; not because they were merciful, for they were not, but because they got a share of the fine paid. One can imagine Chilperic the Wicked saying: 'You bishops have taken away my taxes, and are rapidly squeezing the remains of my domain into your own purse: you might at least allow me the benefit of the criminal propensities of my subjects.' The Church was only too willing to agree; in the first place the king's 'justice' was probably so bad, so arbitrary, so bloody, that any regulation of it seemed good. In the second place many bishops acted as judges, and, though there was as yet no 'canon law' against it, it was a very early belief that no churchman could lawfully pronounce a death-sentence. And, thirdly, superstition stepped in also; the right of 'sanctuary' for guilty as well as for innocent must be maintained; the murderer who clutches St Martin's altar rails, even with gory hands, must be scathless. Finally, as all judges, lay and clerical, counts, vicars, hundred-men or what you will, were unpaid, they too must have encouraged composition for crimes instead of death; they saved the cost of an execution, and probably pocketed a bribe, and at last this bribe becomes customary as 'one-third of the fine to the judge.'

In other respects, also, the procedure in the courts of Frankish Gaul drifts away from the Roman model, of which, however, it retains one thing, the detestable use of torture to extract evidence. Into it has crept the wholly barbaric idea of an 'appeal to the judgment of God,' to some sort of ordeal. Perhaps it was an ordeal of single combat between accuser and accused; perhaps it was some weird process like holding a piece of red-hot iron or plunging the hand into boiling water (which iron or water won't burn or boil you if you are innocent). Perhaps it is the oath of twelve of your friends, in a set form of words, to the effect that they believe you a true man; this is a far less absurd ordeal, but it is an ordeal, and a difficult one into the bargain. Barbarous and pagan as such ordeals were, the Church encouraged them, and solemnly blessed

the iron or conjured demons from the water. Both the duel and the oath are mentioned by Gregory, apparently without astonishment.

Now these laws and justice were administered, and these forms followed, both in the King's own court and in those of his agents in the provinces. His own is held in his rude *Palatium* or palace, for, being a successor of Augustus, each barbarian king calls his house after *the* House whose melancholy ruins are crumbling on the Palatine Hill. He or some deputy will preside over this court, and over all his 'counts' and officials he is sole judge: also over bishops, though they are very apt to appeal to the pope, as yet with little success. Probably when the king did dare to lay hands on a bishop they were strong and irregular hands that he laid. This court will consist of those same *grandes*, *optimates*, *fideles*, *domestici*, *duces*, *comites* of whom we have already had a glimpse, besides some whose functions may have been more specialised, such as chamberlains, cupbearers, treasurers, chancellors, referendaries, constables, marshals. Some of these are clearly to be affiliated to the officials of old Rome; others not so clearly. There is a *Comes Palatii*, who keeps the whole unwieldy machine in some sort of order; he is distinctly of Roman origin; in the seventh century his office will be fused with that of the head steward, and we shall call him 'Mayor of the Palace' and shall find kings trembling at him; from being at first a sort of rude 'chief justice of the king's bench,' he develops into a Vizier, and a Vizier with a bowstring. 'A real despot,' says Montesquieu, 'must have a Vizier.'

Besides this royal court at the palace, we shall find, or ought to find in each of the hundred and twelve *civitates* of old Gaul, one or more district courts called *Malli*, administered by a *comes* or count, whom the later Roman law had known well. The provinces, as centres of administration, are gone, and it is the *civitas* that stands out as the largest administrative division of the country. Much more vaguely each *civitas* seems to have been divided into hundreds, each with a presiding officer called

vicarius or *centenarius;* but all these names are used so loosely and so sporadically that it is often difficult to distinguish between *civitas*, *comitatus*, *pagus*, *centena.* Germany when it comes to be organised at all, under the next race of Frank kings, is divided into *gaue*, *grafschaften*, and hundreds. And when in the ninth century the *comes* in Gaul and the *graf*[1] in Germany begin to make their offices hereditary, each in his district, these districts will be called 'Counties.'

By whatever names we call the officials and their districts on either side of the Rhine, the task of the officials will be very like that of the English sheriffs in the twelfth century. The count will collect taxes and royal rents, he will lead the local force to battle, he will do justice in the local court; and no doubt he will make a handsome thing out of it all. He enjoys a right to *hospitalitas* (which English law will call *purveyance* and French law *droit de gîte*). His *wergild* is enormous because he is *vice regis.* The *mallus*, in which he will sit to do justice, will often be held in the vestibule of a church, for a *basilica* had been a Roman law-court before it was a church at all; and often the local bishop will sit beside him. Another person, of whom one begins to hear, but at first more vaguely, is a *dux*, or duke whom the Franks probably called *heretoga*, *herzog*, i.e., leader of army. He too was known to the latest Roman law, and he is going to be a bigger and a more military man than the count, but at present he is less permanent and there are fewer of his kind. There never was any regular gradation, like 'ten Counts = one Duke' or 'ten Counties = one Duchy.' Finally there were occasionally special royal and roving commissions of *missi* or *legati*, sent round by the Crown, perhaps to make known special royal edicts, perhaps to screw some more cash out of the country. The Carolingian kings will make much more use of these than the Merovingians.

These then are about all the 'Institutions' we can discover in sixth and seventh-century Gaul. Emphatically

[1] Gerefa = steward = graf = count.

there is not as yet any parliament, any general assembly of freemen. Tacitus had spoken of such an assembly as existing among the Germans of the first century; but, if he was not drawing on his imagination altogether, it had entirely disappeared before the sixth. So with the provincial assemblies of old Roman Gaul; though Honorius mentions them in an edict of the early fifth century, they are dead; and the old *curiæ* or town councils are likewise as dead as Julius Cæsar. But, towards the end of the seventh century, we begin to see that the king's court at his palace has become a larger body and a more regularly sitting body than it had been. The name *conventus* is applied to it, and, early in the eighth, this becomes a customary meeting of all the great men of the realm, and is held at a fixed period (early spring). All bishops will come to it, and all *duces* and *comites*, all big officials and all the king's private *fideles*. These men will bring their followers with them, either for protection or for show. The thing will become a review of troops *plus* an armed parliament, in which edicts will be issued and justice administered. It will be a centre of disorder and an occasion of revolt for great men; but it also will put a strong 'constitutional' check upon monarchy. And one of the things which its members will eventually claim is that their offices shall be hereditary, and shall be annexed to the tenure of their hereditary estates.

Then we shall have something more than the germ of an aristocracy; we shall have a feudal aristocracy itself; the 'nobility of service' will be gone. After the death of Dagobert I. the Crown got weaker, and the palace officials began to dispute the king's will. There was a long series of minorities, during which the mayors of the palace virtually ruled and were nominated or elected by the other officials of the palace; the king when he came of age did not dare to remove them, more often they dared to remove him, occasionally shore his long locks and made him into a monk. Then there would be civil war between one mayor and another, instead of between one king and another, and each mayor would have a lot of

dukes and counts at his back. Out of all this grim turmoil arose in mid-eighth century the 'second race' of French kings, the Carolingians.

As for the Church of Gaul, it was no doubt better, though perhaps not much better than the State, and it seems to have been more turbulent, less spiritual, and worse organised than in any other of the new kingdoms. No doubt like the Church in any other part of the old Empire it professed to 'live Roman Law,' but it certainly welcomed some modifications of that law. In the sixth and seventh centuries the popes could do nothing with it; even Gregory the Great failed to reform it. If he had read the chronicle of his namesake of Tours, he would have been horrified to hear that Bishop Priscus of Lyons had a wife and blasphemed his saintly predecessor, that Cautinus of Clermont was a drunkard, buried one of his priests alive and favoured Jews; that another bishop was 'fonder of making the barbarians drunk than of succouring the poor,' and so on. He would also have strongly disapproved of the use of the royal power at episcopal elections; bishops were, indeed, still elected by the 'clergy and people' of the diocese, but they were supposed to be confirmed by the king before they were consecrated or installed. The clergy were always trying to reverse the process, and get their man consecrated at once, so as to cut off the chance of a royal refusal to confirm him; and they were often successful. One gets an impression of the immense power of the bishops; King Chilperic was not far wrong when he said 'there are no kings in this country except the bishops.'

We shall not find archbishops till the end of the seventh century. In the fourth, some sort of primacy had been attributed to the Bishop of Arles, just as in Spain to the Bishop of Toledo, and in Northern Italy to those of Aquileia and Milan. But, from Pope Gregory's days, the See of Rome was steadily overshadowing all local patriarchates. There ought to be a bishop to each Gallic *civitas*, but there was nothing like that number as yet. There is a kind of lesser prelate called a *chorepiscopus*

or suffragan, and he lingers on in places till the ninth or tenth century but his duties are vague. Vague too in Gaul is the division into the seven orders (bishop, priest, deacon, sub-deacon, exorcist, reader, porter) of the Church, but deacons certainly abounded, and it is of them that we hear most. There is also a masterful person called an archdeacon, who exercises jurisdiction over the clergy and is already unpopular, though he has not yet arrived at his twelfth-century eminence, when a learned philosopher could propound, as the subject of a disputation, 'whether it is possible for an archdeacon to be saved.'

There are monasteries in Gaul even before St Benedict; they are usually the foundations of pious laymen and are as yet completely dependent on the bishops. There was even a collection of the precepts of the Eastern monks, by one Cassianus in use in the West as early as 430. Lérins was founded in the fifth century: Luxeuil at the end of the sixth by St Columbanus, and Luxeuil remained the spiritual capital of Christendom-north-of-the-Alps until it was superseded by Cluny in the tenth, and Citeaux in the twelfth century.[1] Sainte-Claude in the Jura was a very early foundation with a splendid history. There were also nunneries; Gregory mentions a terrible scandal in one, recently the home of the saintly Princess Radegunda, at Poitiers; the abbess starved her nuns and was an immoral person; the matter got quite beyond episcopal control, and even a royal commission failed to restore peace.

The bishops, both good and bad, were very active and were for ever travelling, the good ones to attend Church councils, the bad ones to solicit favours at court or commit very unepiscopal crimes. The calling of Church councils was the king's business, and their 'Acts' required royal

[1] The great importance of the Burgundian abbeys lies in the fact that they were on one of the best roads to Rome from Northern Europe, and also on the main road from Southern Germany to France. What Lyons had been to Roman Gaul, these abbeys were to be to the France of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; along that great road from Marseilles to the Channel was to travel half the commerce of Western Europe, past the great fairs or markets of Beaucaire, Lyons, Troyes, Paris and Bruges.

confirmation down to the latest days of the old French monarchy. Simony was rife all over Gaul, probably all over Western Europe; even the good bishops usually had to bribe the king in order to get their sees. Heathenism died hard in outlying districts; near Coblentz Gregory met a deacon called Wulflac, who for years had been preaching to the heathen before he could prevail on them to destroy a statue of Diana, and had even stood on a pillar for a long time 'in imitation of the blessed Simeon of Antioch; but some bishops made me come down and overthrew my pillar,' said he sadly. There were immense numbers of Jews in Gaul, as indeed there were all over the old Empire; the Bishop of Clermont once baptised over five hundred at once 'without any compulsion': those who refused went to Marseilles, out of the frying-pan into the fire, for they were there all baptised by force.[1]

When we come to look at the humbler strata of rural society, we shall find that the manorial system of the later Middle Ages has already struck deep root, that its roots were, in fact, in the soil before the fall of Ancient Rome. There were plenty of extra-legal customs in the Empire which gradually got legal sanction, and some which never got it at all but yet prevailed. Among these was the old relation of 'patron' and 'client.' The necessities of life in the fifth and sixth centuries led to something like a revival of this relation between great men and small men. If the State can't protect you, you must turn to the nearest great man who can. The villages of fair France have, in nine cases out of ten, arisen on the estate of some Gallo-Roman landowner (who perhaps in his turn has succeeded to some Celtic chief and been succeeded by some Frank soldier). Each such estate (*fundus*, *ager*, *prædium*, *villa*, *curtis*) is inscribed on the old tax-roll by the name of the owner who held it when that roll was first made. Owners change, the name does not. Attigny is the property of Altinus in the third

[1] See the Letters of Pope Gregory I., 45. If there were no compulsion at Clermont why did these poor Jews leave it?

century, of Balto the Frank in the sixth, of King Charles the Great in the eighth, and remains a taxable unit, however often it may be sold or divided, so long as *tributum* is paid at all. As barbarism deepens and communications become difficult, its owner comes to live upon it in semifeudal isolation; he parcels out its land to clients, *liti*, *liberti*, *servi*. Little freehold *enclaves* may remain for a century or two within it, whose owners are not clients of Balto, but they are more and more cut off and helpless if they don't take service under him. Before, in the eighth century, it passes to the Crown (say by marriage, bequest, or confiscation), the small freemen have been 'levelled down,' and the slaves 'levelled up,' although the generic name of *villeins* or *villani* for all is of somewhat later date. All will owe certain services or rents in kind to the "lord of the manor," and custom will have fixed these services and rents at a rate not too high to be paid, but needing unremitting agricultural toil of the payer. There is continual manumission of slaves, for the Church, though she owns slaves herself, encourages it; but there is continual recruiting of the servile class also, by capture in war, by purchase from pirates, by judicial sentences. The slave has a man-price if he is slain, but it is paid to his master. He may not be sold to a pagan, nor to a Jew, nor out of the country; the Church protects his marriage and his family life, it excommunicates the lord who illtreats him, and is very apt to offer him an asylum if he runs away. Some slaves will probably have no land or fixed *casata* allotted to them; but a wise landowner will find that it pays him best to allot to all, no doubt in smaller pieces than to *litus* or *libertus*. A *litus* may hold thirty or forty acres, which may comprise arable, vineyard, pasture, and rights of common; his rent may be paid either in kind or in labour on the lord's fields.

All this has a very 'feudal' aspect, and 'feudalism' is no doubt deeply rooted in rural life before it reaches up and grips the relation between the king and the great landowners. Man comes to depend on man for his bread

and his freedom, soon also for his protection from other men. Balto of Attigny has perhaps bought from King Dagobert a charter, exempting his estate from taxation and from the justice of the local court. A bishop or a monastery (and the Church cultivates her estates on the same manorial plan) will be certain to possess such a charter. So Balto or the abbot judges and polices his own estate, takes the fines for his men's crimes, and perhaps even hangs them. In theory the people of Gaul are still supposed to be under Roman law; in reality they are under the nearest great landowner. And, on the whole, it was better for them to be so. Before the end of the seventh century every guarantee of Roman citizenship was gone, and justice had become a mere matter of profit to the king or his agents. Three weary centuries of land-grabbing and man-stealing have left the patronage of the great the sole refuge of those who wish for protection. There is no fun in *Civis Romanus sum*, when there is no Rome left to protect you; you had better (supposing you are not a Jew), 'commend yourself' to the Bishop of Clermont. Soon we shall see that even the king himself will be obeyed not because he is the king, but only because he has immense numbers of people in his *mund*, his protection, and that he will be obeyed only by those who are in such *mund*. Personal ties will have supplanted political allegiance. Then the kings will give estates, and hereditary estates, to their 'fideles' on condition of service in future wars, simply because they cannot otherwise get served at all. And feudalism will then be full-blown.

That there were villages not upon any great man's estate is pretty certain; there may have been associations of small free landowners for mutual protection and help in agriculture, which grew into villages and towns; and also, at all places of river-ford or mountain-crossing, such villages would be sure to spring up, even on 'no-man's land'; but in time all such must pass either under manorial or royal protection.

I have dwelt thus at length on the conditions of Gaul

in transition, partly because we have some sources of knowledge for them, which we lack for those of Spain and Italy, partly because the history of France is such a much greater one than that of any other child of the Roman Empire.[1] Italy was a ruin at the end of the sixth century; Spain, as far as we know anything of her, was doing her best to ruin herself even before she was conquered by the 'Moors' in 711. Moreover, we may fairly guess that, wherever in Italy or Spain there was partial exemption from ruin, life, both urban and rural, and the shapes assumed by 'Government,' were not wholly unlike that which I have tried to describe as existing in Gaul. In Eastern Europe all civilisation was dying at the hands of the Slavs. Germany was not yet born; if she cannot be called a child, she will be a grandchild of Rome, for the womb of Frankish Gaul is already heavy with her. Gaul herself will, indeed, suffer badly in the ninth century at the hands of the northern pirates; but she will not be ruined, and her civilisation will always remain more Roman than that of any other European nation.

Now I do not suppose that my readers will care to learn much about the chronology, the pedigrees, or the crimes of the Merovingian kings of Gaul, from Clovis to that Childeric III. who was deposed in favour of Pippin the Caroling in 751, nor about the frequent divisions into kingdoms of Metz, Soissons, Orleans, of Austrasia, Neustria and Burgundy. No geographical reason can be alleged for these divisions, and no reason for the occasional reunions of the whole except that these last usually mean that, for the moment, all descendants of Clovis except one have been killed. The royal race of the Burgundians is finally extinguished in 534 and their territory ruled by a Frankish king, sometimes in union with Neustria or Austrasia, sometimes not. A strip of Southern Gaul remains under Visigothic kings of Spain right into the eighth century, and Aquitaine is always a land apart, which will give the

[1] This book will purposely avoid the history of one of the greatest of the children—our own country.

Carolingians endless trouble. The basis of the population of Aquitaine was not Celtic at all but Iberian, or Basque (*i.e.*, non-Aryan), although it had been quite as much Romanised as Provence had been. Brittany also gives trouble, and there are Frankish wars against it from the end of the fifth till the eighth century; it has been largely repeopled by real Britons[1] flying from the heathen Saxons in the fifth and sixth; but the Brittany of the Dark Ages always means Western Brittany only; the Breton cities of Nantes and Rennes are then both in 'Gaul.' We shall find under Charles the Great an official called a 'Warden of the Breton March.'

The most famous incident in the history of the Merovingian Franks is the long rivalry of thirty years between two queens, the Frankish slave-girl Fredegonda of Neustria and the Visigothic princess Brunhilda of Austrasia and Burgundy. It is one long tale of atrocious murders, murders of sons, of brothers, and of wives, ending in 613 when old Brunhilda is tied to the tail of a wild horse and dragged to death by order of Clothair II. The most interesting person is Fredegonda's husband Chilperic, murdered in 584. Gregory knew him well and disliked him extremely. Amazing to say, he was a man of some learning and wrote verses, 'though these conformed to no rules of prosody or metre.' He wanted, like the Emperor Claudius before him, to introduce some Greek letters to the Latin alphabet; in fact he ordered all the books in his kingdom to be rewritten in his new spelling. Also he had some startling views on theology, for he wished to abolish the distinction of Persons in the Trinity, and simply to say 'God.' Gregory quoted Hilary and Eusebius against him, but he seemed to regard these long-dead saints as his personal enemies. Finally he was told plainly that, whatever else he did, he *must not* meddle with theology; the bishops evidently regarded these tastes of his as those of a dangerous lunatic, who would be better employed in murdering his relatives. But he did plenty of that too,

[1] Hence perhaps the legend of the Forest of Broceliande in the Arthurian story; that lies in Central Brittany.

and he even annulled the wills of men who made large bequests to the Church.[1]

Theudebert (534-548) is perhaps another king worth remembering; we have already seen him prosecuting his conquests in Italy in Justinian's time, and driven back by the plague; he is a man of some importance because he thoroughly vindicates Frankish power in south-west Germany, coins gold, and evidently frightens Justinian with tall talk about pushing on towards the south-east of Europe. As the sixth century goes on we begin to hear of Bavarians, Thuringians, and Saxons, all more or less hostile to, but often beaten by the East Frankish kings; we also hear of Slavonic tribes coming from the Vistula or the Oder towards the Elbe and the Upper Main. The death of Clothair I. (also a valiant conqueror) in 561 led to a fresh partition and to the wars of Fredegonda and Brunhilda which I have just mentioned; these to some extent arrested the growth of the Frank power as a whole, though there were continual frontier raids and wars between the Burgundian-Franks and the newly arrived Lombards in the West Alpine region. That same Mummolus, who stole for his king the finger-bone of St Sergius, was the hero of several of these wars; it is perhaps worth noticing, in consideration of what was coming, that at the end of the sixth century the Pope several times invoked Frank aid against Lombards, and that the good Catholic Franks responded readily to his call; but this was not to be the case in the seventh century.

During the civil wars of 561-614 the power of the *grandes* seems to have increased very much, and a foreshadow of much future history may be seen in an edict of Clothair II., who became sole king of the Franks when he had murdered Brunhilda (613). It is evident that this edict is wrung from him, for he 'decrees' (or rather, in reality, promises) that counts shall only be chosen to administer districts of which they are natives, and that the Crown will not confiscate the lands of those who die intestate, nor compel widows and girls of their *grandes* to

[1] Gregory V., 32.

marry against their will. This last promise reminds us of our own Magna Charta, and this edict of 614 has sometimes been called a charter. But to whom are the promises made? Not to any 'hereditary aristocracy,' for there is no definite aristocracy in existence; but just to the *grandes* and other officers of the *Palatium* who want to become an hereditary aristocracy.

To Clothair II. succeeded Dagobert I. (628-638) as sole king: externally he has a great show of power; he is sometimes treated as the typical Merovingian king; his territory stretches from Elbe to Atlantic, and he not only interferes in Spanish politics, but is an ally of the Emperor Heraclius, and in that capacity fights and beats Slavs and Avars far on his Eastern frontier, without neglecting to subdue the usual rebellions in Aquitaine and Brittany. But his *grandes* are growing strong, and in his last years force him to cede his Eastern dominions to his son. After Dagobert's death it does not matter what the king is called; the real power is in the hands of the Mayor of the Palace, and there is generally a Mayor of Neustria and a Mayor of Austrasia, and sometimes also a Mayor of Burgundy.

Among the *grandes* who had been instrumental in the destruction of Brunhilda, and in wringing the edict of 614 from Clothair II., were a certain Arnulf and a certain Pippin. Arnulf who, according to his family 'tree' had married into a Roman senatorial house from Narbonne, had graduated as Duke and as Bishop of Metz before he became St Arnulf. Pippin became Austrasian Mayor in 622; the son of Arnulf married the daughter of Pippin, and we must keep our eyes on the offspring of that marriage. Pippin's own son Grimoald afterwards became Mayor of Neustria, and actually tried to get *his* son chosen king in Austrasia. But the Franks were not yet prepared to abandon the race of Clovis, and both Grimoald and his son were killed, and the families of Pippin and St Arnulf got a bad set-back for some years. Not long after the overthrow of a terrible ruffian called Ebroin, Pippin II., grandson both of St Arnulf and Pippin I., became

Austrasian Mayor in 681, and beat the Neustrians in fair fight six years later. He hammered heathen Frisians on the Lower Rhine and beyond it, he hammered Alamans on the Main; and so completely did he act as if he were the real ruler of the Franks that he nominated a little boy of six to be Mayor of Neustria. Like all of his house, except his famous son Charles Martel, he was devoted to the Church; he encouraged missionary preaching in heathen Frisia and Central Germany, and, where he could, he protected the missionaries with the sword. When he died in 714 we find that, like a regular king, he had left a hoard of 'treasure,' for which there was a family squabble developing into a sort of civil war. Victorious from that war emerged the most vigorous of his three sons Charles, soon to be called Charles Martel, 'the hammer.' It was a bad time for good Catholics to squabble, for the Moors were at that moment crossing the Pyrenees!

Before we inquire what the children of the sun and the desert were doing among the snows of the Pyrenees, we must look back for a few moments to the earlier fortunes of Spain and Italy. Very little is discoverable about either of them. Spain, once a rich and flourishing Roman province, especially abounding in mineral wealth, has always suffered from its internal mountain barriers; it is a table-land cut up, without plan or symmetry, by high and arid ranges, and the only real plain is that of the Ebro on the north-east.[1] The extreme south is really a bit of Africa, the date-palm ripens there, and monkeys may be seen scrambling about on the rock of Gibraltar. The east has

[1] The Pyrenees are really a worse barrier than the Alps, partly because their main slope is the other way (steep to climb from the north), but more because the passes are mainly at the eastern and western extremities. No doubt there are more passes than geography books would have us believe, but there are long stretches without them, and this accounts for the long independence of little isolated cantons of shepherd folk far up among the rocks, one of which survives to-day as the 'Republic of Andorra.' Counties like Barcelona and Bearn owed their importance to their guardianship of the passes, just as King Cottius in the days of Augustus, and the Savoyards in later history owed theirs to their use of snow-shovels on the great Alpine highways.

a climate like that of Italy; the west, like that of Ireland. The racial base was 'Iberian,' whatever that may mean; but the close connection with Africa must always have led to immigration from, as well as emigration to that continent. No doubt the Vandal wave of the early fifth century may have left a silt in Spain, and the Suevic wave had even left a little Suevic kingdom in Gallicia and North-west Portugal (strangely enough its kings early became Catholics); but the Visigoths, few as they were, had since the middle of the fifth century far outnumbered all other Teutonic races in Spain; and the Visigothic kings, who reigned at Toulouse and afterwards at Toledo, seem, at first, in spite of their Arianism, to have got on well with their Hispano-Roman subjects. The *Lex Romana Visigothorum*, composed in Aquitaine in 506, did much to unify the Goths and Spaniards, and was followed by a series of codes called *Leges Visigothorum* in the seventh century. The *Origines* of Bishop Isidore of Seville (early seventh), the greatest compendium of ancient literature made in the West during the Dark Ages, was addressed to Roman and Goth alike. And, up to the arrival of the Franks, it had looked as if the Visigothic power was going to be dominant in Gaul as well as in Spain.

But the conquest of the Visigoth Alaric II., by Clovis in 507, embittered the Arianism of the Goths as well as drove them back almost to the Pyrenees; with the Franks the Visigoths never ceased to fight for the southern strip of Gaul till their monarchy fell for good. The wars of Catholic Justinian against Arian Goths in Italy, gave the Spanish brethren of the latter a strong feeling of the solidarity of the Gothic race, and in the middle of the sixth century their king Theudis sent help to Totila; he was even inclined to cross the straits and to tackle the recently re-Romanised province of Africa *en revers*. But Justinian retaliated on them; after the final fall of the Ostrogothic kingdom he sent his general Liberius to Spain (554), conquered many of the coast towns including Cadiz, and even penetrated to Cordova, while his fleets sailed round the peninsula and appeared in the Garonne.

No doubt the Greeks were aided by rebellious Visigoths as well as by Catholic provincials, for the Visigoths seem to have established an hereditary aristocracy, of immense power and turbulence, much earlier than the Franks. Leovigild, who moved the capital from Toulouse and reigned at Toledo from 567 to 586, had almost as much trouble with his own rebels as he had with the invaders. But he triumphed over both, and put to the sword all the Greek garrisons which he took, although the last of these were not actually expelled till 624. Leovigild also extinguished the small Suevic kingdom for good; the name of the city of Vittoria does not commemorate the triumph of Arthur, afterwards Duke of Wellington, over the French in 1813, but that of Leovigild over the Sueves. The same king commenced a fierce persecution of the Catholics, and even put his own son to death for that faith. But another son, his successor Reccared, at once accepted Catholicism, and seems to have had no difficulty in persuading his Goths to do likewise; he was Pope Gregory's darling convert. The Council of Toledo (589 or 590) is the birthday of that too vigorous Spanish orthodoxy, that alliance of Church and State, which survived the Moorish conquest and found its highest exponent in Philip II. Goth and Spaniard rapidly became one people, and signalised their union by a long series of glorious persecutions of the Jews.

Yet the turbulence of the nobles was not in the least restrained by these changes and went from worse to worse. The terrible old king Kindaswintha, who began his ten years' reign (642-652) at the age of seventy-nine, had to direct all his cruel energies against his over-mighty subjects, whom he put to death by the score with a zeal worthy of an Ameer of Afghanistan. One reason of their turbulence was that the stream of Teutonic blood in Spain was a comparatively thin one; the peninsula is vast and Goths and Sueves were few, so those of them who became powerful became very powerful. They drove their Hispano-Roman tenants to follow them to their civil battles in large disorderly hosts; small free landholders were extinct in Spain much sooner than in the neighbouring kingdoms.

During the last half century of Christian rule shadowy king succeeded shadowy king, more often by election, usurpation, or murder than by hereditary right. Of one of these Wamba, who tried to vindicate royal power and enrol the once free peasants in his army (thereby offending their lords, who needed them for other purposes), the story is told that in 680 he was caught, after too good a dinner, was tonsured and woke up in a monastery. When he protested, he was told that it was 'only one of his delusions that he had ever been king, he had always been a monk.' The hero of the exploit whose name was Earwig became king in his stead, but he too ended by dying in a monastery. Hardly do we know who was the last king of old Christian Spain; some say it was Witiza, some say it was Roderic. But whoever he was, he and his kingdom were extinguished at a blow by the Moorish invaders in 711.

When we turn to Italy the story of the seventh century is not quite so unknown; though we must not put credence in all the statements of the lives of the popes in the *Liber Pontificalis*, that work becomes much more full about this date. And we have the Lombard deacon, Paul, as a highly intelligent writer on the period. Yet we can hardly call him a guide, for his national sympathies pull him one way and his religious prejudices another. He writes, moreover, towards the end of the eighth century, but he undoubtedly used an earlier history of the Lombards, and he had very good means of knowing what he was writing about. There are besides a great number of papal letters and documents surviving.

Much of the papal history is of course concerned with the relations between Rome and Constantinople, and with those between Rome and Ravenna, where the exarchate dragged on an ever-shrinking existence, always threatened both by Pope and Lombard until the middle of the eighth century. On these points I shall have more to say when I come to make the Papacy the pivot of a later chapter. Of the internal history of Italy itself our authorities tell us next to nothing; the darkness actually increases more at the centre of world-history, 'Rome which was once the

Capital of the World' as Paul the deacon calls it, than at the extremities. The great monastery of Saint Benedict at Monte Cassino, sacked by the Lombards at their first invasion, was empty for over a hundred years until it was restored in the reign of Liutprand in the eighth century. The things we really want to know most no one tells us, *e.g.* whether there was a Byzantine governor in Rome itself; if so what were his relations with the Pope; did he live in a corner of the crumbling Palatine house? Did the Lombards, after they had settled down, get on well or ill with the Italian provincials? Even the best of Lombard laws, and there are some good ones, only once mention 'Romans' (a single sentence speaks of a 'Roman female slave'); but this *may* be interpreted to mean that they ignored all distinction of race. And it is quite clear that the Italians themselves must have 'lived' Roman law. Did the towns retain any trace of *curiæ* or self-government? No answer can be given. We begin to hear of a 'Duchy of Rome,' which is more than what we now call the Roman *Campagna*, and reaches to the Liris (Garigliano); we ought therefore to presume the regular existence of a *dux* or duke to govern it, but it is little more than a presumption, for we seldom meet him in the flesh. We also hear of a Duchy of Naples; the Greeks did certainly hold on to fragments of this, though always at war with the Lombard dukes of Benevento for it, right down to the tenth century. The Venetian lagoons in the north are also under a duke and altogether escape the Lombards, as they will afterwards escape the Franks. A slender strip of territory, always terribly at the mercy of the Lombard Duke of Spoleto, connects Rome and Ravenna and also escapes them. The Genoese riviera, with Genoa as its capital, escapes them till about 640. Perhaps there were some Byzantine officials of a military kind in these districts, and perhaps these began to form the germs of such 'feudal' aristocracy as afterwards came to exist in Italy; we do hear vaguely of 'tribunes,' and these may have been nominated either by the exarch at Ravenna or directly by the emperor. Certainly in Rome itself we shall soon begin to see the

germs of a new aristocracy, who will perhaps become the famous 'barons' of the tenth and following centuries; they have their 'towers' on the Campagna, and their houses (perhaps fortified) in the city as well. As to their origin or descent, we can only guess that they may have been Byzantine officials, nephews or relatives of popes, or military officers; that in any single case they were the issue of old senatorial families, is extremely unlikely. Of one thing only we can feel sure, that all great men, whether of Lombard, Greek or Latin extraction, strove to make their offices, their property, and their titles hereditary, and that they usually succeeded in doing so; property and authority became one and the same thing. Result: all small proprietors must have sought the protection of some great man, and feudal relations must have come in everywhere.

The popes of the seventh century, hardly one of whose names is worth remembering, still need and get confirmation from the emperor, who towards the end of that century delegates the job to the exarch. They are oftener Greek than Roman by descent, and this alone proves that Constantinople had a good deal to say to their nomination. But, like other bishops, they are still supposed to be chosen by the 'clergy and people'[1] of their city; and these clergy and people are, as yet, ready to rally to them whenever they are bullied by emperor or Lombard. More and more, ever since Gregory the Great, Rome is getting to look to the popes as sovereigns.

The Lombard Court of Pavia was not really as hostile to the Papacy as the popes believed or pretended to believe it to be; but it had no conception of the ultimate end for which the popes were working. It had, I think, under Agilulf, who died in 615, under Queen Theodelinda, who acted as regent till 626, under Rotharis (636-652), Grimoald (662-671), above all under Liutprand, the best and greatest of the Lombard kings (713-744), the natural

[1] *Clerus, Ordo, atque Populus* is the correct expression, *ordo* standing no doubt for the *curialis ordo*, and naturally, when the *curiæ* had gone, coming to mean the 'nobles,' such as they were.

and laudable ambition to create a Lombardo-Italian nation with Rome as capital. The enemies of whom it took account were the Greeks of Constantinople and their exarch at Ravenna, and the Avars on the north-east. But it very naturally failed to conceive that the Bishop of Rome was ever likely to be its rival for temporal sovereignty in Italy; it would have needed superhuman insight, even for Liutprand, who lived almost till the papal claim was made, to have divined this.

It was not obstinate Arianism on the part of the Lombards which prompted the popes to hate them so much; most of these kings were Arians up to 653—none actively after that. Theodelinda had been a most devout Catholic. Rotharis, though an Arian, was quite favourable to Catholics, and published in Latin in 643 a code of laws on which Grimoald, who himself leaned to Catholicism, improved twenty-five years later. Grimoald's code might perhaps have proved to be a basis for the union of Latin and Lombard peoples.[1] Traces of intellectual interest begin to appear at his court; perhaps germs of the so-called Lombard architecture, generally believed to be much later, may be discovered before the middle of the eighth century, though we cannot say for certain in what style Theodelinda's basilica at Monza was first built. The monastery of Bobbio, in the heart of the Lombard Apennines, was a centre of Catholic propaganda, and does not seem to have been disturbed; in short, there is no evidence that the Lombard Arians were, in the seventh century, persecutors at all.[2] Liutprand in the eighth was the devoutest of Catholics and, indeed, it was his Catholicism and his reverence for the 'Holy Father' that again and again spoilt his game. He was very nearly King of Italy; he was the right man to become King of Italy and

[1] Is it fanciful to reflect that one of the best of the heroes of the Italian *risorgimento* bore the same name as King Grimoald's son, *Garibald?*

[2] It is difficult to say when the Lombard tongue finally gave way to the rustic Latin which was becoming Italian; Lombard was spoken in the time of Paul the Deacon.

to make Italy a nation. But, by his time, the popes had thoroughly grasped the principle that there should be no King of Italy. They would play off against him their outworn allegiance to the Empire (which at the very moment they were utterly refusing to obey). They would threaten him with hell-fire, they would call in the Franks against him—but he should not be allowed to be a national sovereign.

I do not say these kings, with the exception of Liutprand, were not barbarians, for they were exceedingly fierce ones; I only say that the popes prevented them from being anything better. The throne of Pavia was oftener filled by usurpation following on murder than by hereditary succession. The great dukes, especially those of Spoleto and Benevento, were at perpetual war with their nominal sovereigns. From the death of Grimoald, himself an usurper, to the accession of Liutprand was one long period of civil war and anarchy. But Liutprand was a great restorer, a great pacificator and a very considerable legislator. We shall meet him again after we have considered the events of the seventh century in the Nearer East.

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ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER VI

The TIME covered is roughly from 602, the deposition of Maurice at Constantinople, to 768, the accession of Charlemagne as King of the Franks.

The chief EVENTS described are—(1) The last struggle between Persia and the Roman Empire, 602-628. (2) The rise of Mahomet and the consequent impact of the Arabs upon the Persian and Roman Empires; the history of the early caliphate from the death of Mahomet in 634 till its split into two centres at Bagdad and Cordova in 750 (see Argument to Chapter VII.). (3) The steady Orientalising of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire; the loss of Syria, Africa, and much of Asia Minor to the Arabs; the imminent danger of the Balkan provinces from Bulgarians and Avars; the gradual loss of imperial hold on Italy to the popes, to the Lombard kings, and finally to the Franks; yet the strengthening of what remained of the Empire. (4) The struggle in Italy between the popes and Lombards, which leads to the calling in of the Franks in 754, and the consequent fall of the Lombard kingdom. (5) The growing weakness of the Merovingian kings of the Franks, ending with the substitution of the Caroling race as kings in 751. (6) The weakness of the Papacy in the seventh century, followed by its increasing strength under Gregory II., Gregory III., Zacharias, and Stephen II. in the eighth; the monothelite controversy between the West and East in the seventh century, followed by the iconoclastic controversy in the eighth; all preparing for the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches. (8) The fall of Christian Spain before the Moors in 711; the danger in which France was until the battle of Poitiers in 732. (8) The Christianisation of Germany in the eighth century by missionaries working hand in hand with the Caroling rulers of the Franks; the organisation of the German Church; the growth of monasticism and superstition.

The chief ACTORS in these events are :—

(1) The Heraclian dynasty in Constantinople, beginning with

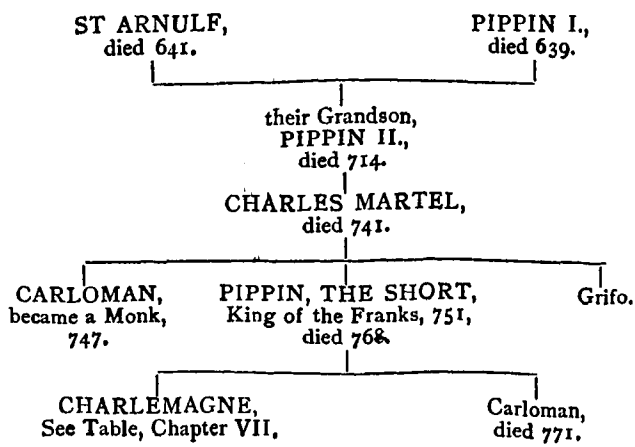
HERACLIUS I., 610-641.
|
CONSTANTINE III., died 641.
|
CONSTANS II., died 668.
|
CONSTANTINE IV., THE BEARDED, died 685.
|
JUSTINIAN II., THE NOSE-CUT, deposed 695, restored 705, died 711.
Then anarchy and shadow emperors till the Isaurian dynasty begins with
LEO III., 717-741.
See Table in Chapter VII.

LEONTIUS, succeeded on Justinian's deposition, 695-698, was succeeded by
TIBERIUS III. (or IV.), 698-705.

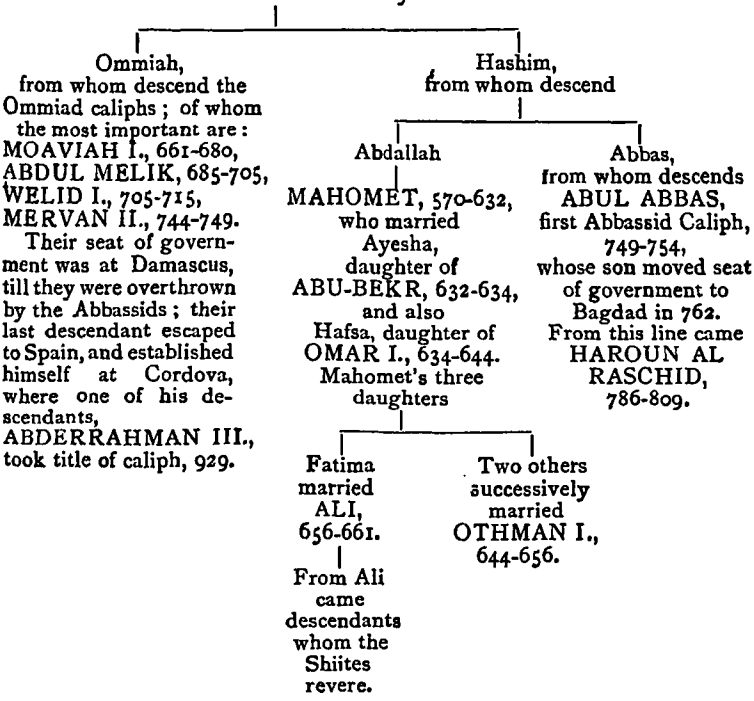
(2) Of the later Lombard kings in Italy, the only important ones in this period are :—

LIUTPRAND, 713-744.
ASTULPH, 749-756.
DESIDERIUS, 756, deposed 774, the last Lombard King.

(3) The Frankish 'Mayors of the Palace,' who became kings of the Franks, 751.


ST ARNULF, died 641.
PIPPIN I., died 639.
their Grandson, PIPPIN II., died 714.
CHARLES MARTEL, died 741.
CARLOMAN, became a Monk, 747.
PIPPIN, THE SHORT, King of the Franks, 751, died 768.
Grifo.
CHARLEMAGNE, See Table, Chapter VII.
Carloman, died 771.

(4) Mahomet and his relations and successors, thus:—


There is a common Koreishite ancestry for
Ommiah, from whom descend the Ommiad caliphs; of whom the most important are: MOAVIAH I., 661-680, ABDUL MELIK, 685-705, WELID I., 705-715, MERVAN II., 744-749. Their seat of government was at Damascus, till they were overthrown by the Abbassids; their last descendant escaped to Spain, and established himself at Cordova, where one of his descendants, ABDERRAHMAN III., took title of caliph, 929.
Hashim, from whom descend
Abdallah
MAHOMET, 570-632, who married Ayesha, daughter of ABU-BEKR, 632-634, and also Hafsa, daughter of OMAR I., 634-644. Mahomet's three daughters
Abbas, from whom descends ABUL ABBAS, first Abbassid Caliph, 749-754, whose son moved seat of government to Bagdad in 762. From this line came HAROUN AL RASCHID, 786-809.
Fatima married ALI, 656-661.
From Ali came descendants whom the Shiites revere.
Two others successively married OTHMAN I., 644-656.

The first four caliphs ruled from Medina and Mecca, but Ali also ruled at Kufa.

See also notes on pp. 206, 207.

CHAPTER VI

ISLAM AND CHRISTENDOM

HUJUS in adventum jam nunc et Caspia regna
Responsis horrent divum et Mæotia tellus,
Et septemgemini turbant trepida ostia Nili.

YOU will remember that, a few pages back, I referred to certain 'Moors' as crossing the Pyrenees at the beginning of the eighth century. Who were the Moors,[1] and what business had they in those mountains? To understand this we must begin by shifting the centre of the story to Constantinople a century before.

In describing Justinian's reign I told you how certain Greek philosophers had bethought themselves for a moment of taking refuge in Persia. Persia was, in fact, not an unnatural place for exiles who suffered from Constantinopolitan orthodoxy. Heretics were suffering equally and contemporaneously with philosophers, and, in the conflict between heresy and orthodoxy, there had not been wanting temptations to weak-kneed Christians to apostatise outright to the Persian creed. This apostasy had gone some length in provinces like Syria, and may account for the ease with which their populations after-

[1] It is difficult to know when to write 'Moors,' when 'Saracens' or 'Arabs.' As the Arab conquest spread westwards and northwards and absorbed many races with great rapidity, the bulk of Moslem fighting men probably soon ceased to be of Arab descent. In Spain one generally calls them 'Moors'; in Italy and the Mediterranean, 'Saracens'; in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor, at first 'Arabs,' then 'Saracens.' The Latin word *Maurus*, Greek Μαῦρος, of uncertain derivation, meant in the sixth and seventh centuries an inhabitant of Mauritania, *i.e.* N.W. Africa.

wards accepted Islam. At least a bishop, who, like Nestorius, had refused to call the Blessed Virgin 'Mother of God,' might be fairly safe beyond the Euphrates. At Edessa, still nominally within the Roman Empire, 'Nestorians' were strong in the sixth century, and passed some shade of Greek culture on to the Persian kingdom of Chosroes Nushirvan. The 'Great King' was not wholly averse to the Nestorians, and their belief trickled, in thin rivulets it is true and much corrupted, over parts of Asia, even into India and China.

For Persia under the Sassanid dynasty, if it was generally in conflict with the Roman Empire, was also ever seeking to follow the path of Alexander towards the rising sun. Out of this might almost spring the germs of an agreement between the Roman emperor and the Great King; the latter might say, 'I cannot swallow India if you keep on bothering me on the Euphrates,' and the former might reply, 'Well, my present designs are on what you would call the Far West,' *i.e.*, the Mediterranean countries. It never quite came to this, but some idea of the kind probably prompted the Emperor Maurice to interfere in 591 in a Persian civil war, and to put a Chosroes II. on the throne of Ctesiphon with the help of a 'Roman' army; oddly enough a patriarch of the Nestorian Church in Persia seems to have been a mediator in the business. Therefore, when Maurice fell in 602, Chosroes II. set out to avenge his friend on the tyrant Phocas.

This was the beginning of a fearful impact of the Persians on the Roman Empire. All the outlying provinces were quickly overrun, for Phocas was as supine and as incompetent as he was bloody, and, by the year 608, some Persian troops were actually gazing at the dome of St Sophia from the sands of Chalcedon. At Carthage ruled, in the name of the Empire, Heraclius the Exarch of Africa, and he now prepared to liberate the capital from Phocas and the Persians alike. He sent two expeditions, one by land through Egypt, which quickly cut off the corn supply from Constantinople, and one by

sea under his son, Heraclius the younger, to the Bosphorus. The latter won an easy victory, for the capital was bare of troops, and young Heraclius slew Phocas in 610. He was at once acclaimed emperor, and ought, if he had been in force enough, to have proceeded to tackle the Persians.

But these, aided by 'Saracen' hordes from the edge of the Syrian desert, were in full career of victory. They took Damascus in 613; they took Jerusalem with the Holy Sepulchre and the True Cross; they passed on to Egypt and occupied Alexandria in 615, while in Asia Minor another and larger Persian host had, for the second time, penetrated to Chalcedon. Only a few isolated Greek garrisons were holding out when, on the European side, the Avars joined in the terrible game, swept into Thrace and beleaguered the long wall of Anastasius. The last vestige of Romano-Greek civilisation was trembling in the balance, and the new emperor appeared to be as powerless as Phocas himself. In despair he seems at first to have contemplated the transference of the seat of the Empire to Carthage, a step from which the shades of Dido and Æneas might alike have warned him. He was a nervous, high-strung creature, full of mystical and religious feelings, and subject to swift impulses of courage and panic. And so, while the capital still held out (for neither of its barbarous enemies had any siege-craft at all, nor was there any regular siege) we find that, in 620, he had bribed the Avars to retire and was busy raising a new army. Two years later he slipped across the Bosphorus, and began a career of victory in the rear of the Persians; he penetrated through Armenia into the northern provinces of Persia, and, in the fiery spirit of a crusader, destroyed the temples of the fire-worshippers.

In 626 Chosroes made fresh treaties with Avars, Bulgars and Slavs, and set on foot a great double siege of Constantinople. Heraclius repeated his exploit of 622, landing his troops at Trebizond on the Eastern Euxine. He could trust his Greek fleet to keep the narrow Bosphorus, and, though the Avars had got through the long wall, he could trust the walls of Constantine to

protect the city itself. In fact, after starving for a month in front of these walls, the Avars were obliged to retreat. Meanwhile the gallant emperor had called to his aid the wild tribes of the Caucasus, among them a tribe called the TURKS,[1] and with them had again raided far into Persian territory. The strange allies pressed on by way of Nineveh to Dastagerd, a great palace and treasure-place of Chosroes, which was utterly destroyed at the end of 627. Still the main Persian army remained fronting Constantinople at Chalcedon, and might long have continued to do so, but for the discovery which its commander made that his king intended to supersede and probably kill him; thereupon, in wrath, he gave his king's whole cause away, concluded a peace with the Constantinopolitan regency, and marched off East with his whole force. Civil war in Persia followed, and Chosroes was killed in 628. Heraclius may well have ascribed his delivery, as he did, to the direct interference of Heaven.[2] At the peace which followed he recovered the True Cross and restored it with much pomp to the Church at Jerusalem; he recovered also all his provinces. But the result of the wars had been that all the Near East, on both sides of the Euphrates, had been drained and wasted and ruined at the most critical moment in its history. In wretched civil wars the Sassanid dynasty flickered on for three more years, and in 632-6 fell for ever before the Arab scimitar.

The Arabian Peninsula has been described as an island between the desert and the sea, and, in fact, the northern desert cuts it off almost entirely from contact with

[1] Probably 'Chazars' of the Volga districts.

[2] He ascribed it to the Virgin Mary, who had hardly been an object of *worship* at all before the sixth century. Many saints were worshipped before the Virgin, but always in some local cult, as at the place of their martyrdom. St Mary of course obtained an infinite number of local cults and local names, but her real cult was to be the universal one as 'Mother of God.' This has led some people to ascribe her worship to Greek superstition, which welcomed her as a returned Demeter, others to trace it to Teutonic origin, as if she were the Christianised Freya or even Nerthus (the Teutonic Demeter).

Western civilisation except by way of the Red Sea. Over that desert have roamed for countless generations untamed tribes of 'Saracens,' as the 'Bedouins' wander to-day. But the southern cities of the Peninsula did a great trade across the Red Sea, and some trade with the Far East, for the Arabs were, before all things, natural merchants. They believed themselves to be Semitic in origin—children of Ishmael or of Esau, but it is clear that African, and especially Ethiopian elements have largely leavened the pure-bred Arab population. In the sixth century they were mainly heathens, worshipping, among countless other idols, a sacred stone which (as Mahomet afterwards said) the Angel Gabriel had brought from heaven; it had been white when brought, but the sins of the people had blackened it. It was kept in a temple at Mecca called the Kaaba; but Mecca was quite a recent foundation, and of the earlier situation of the Black Stone nothing is known.[1] Gradually the Kaaba had been filled with other idols, and so it had become the great centre of Arab pilgrimage, and Mecca the most important of Arab cities.

This was all to the profit of the ruling families or clans of Mecca, especially of the clan of the Koreish, who had the hereditary guardianship of the Kaaba. There was no king, and the 'government,' such as it was, was purely an aristocratic one. Among the aristocracy there was a good deal of culture and poetry of a kind, tempered by fierce blood feuds between clan and clan; you cut your enemy's throat and made a song on him either before or afterwards. Among these same clans there lingered also something more than a mere tradition of One God, Allah, the Creator of all things. Jewish influence had largely contributed to keep this alive—for, where was trade, there were Jews—and to both Abraham and Moses as prophets homage of a kind was paid. Christianity of a very

[1] There were other Black Stones in history; the priest-emperor Elagabalus (218-221) had worshipped one at Emesa, and when he assumed the purple he brought it to Rome and built a temple for it on the Palatine.

corrupt species had also penetrated, either through the desert or across the Red Sea.

Mahomet the son of Abdallah[1] was born in 570 or 571 at Mecca, of the 'Hashimite' branch of the Koreishite clan. His ancestors had grown rich by providing for pilgrims who came to pray at the Black Stone, to which idol his own father had once been very nearly sacrificed. Young Isaac, in the Bible story, was redeemed for a single ram; it cost a hundred camels to redeem young Abdallah. But a family feud and other ill luck had left Mahomet in early youth an orphan and very poor; the leading Koreishites had become his enemies. A distant relative, a rich widow called Kadishah made him her steward and married him. He soon rose to importance as a man of integrity, and was famed for his gentleness of character. All around him he saw, among the 'intellectuals,' symptoms of discontent with the growth of idol worship; 'this,' said thoughtful men, 'is not the faith of Abraham.' And it is evident that, before he commenced prophet, Mahomet was already a pure monotheist. He was nervous, and given to 'ecstasies'; used to go into 'retreats' and commune with his own soul in the hills. He may have read[2] Christian or perhaps Gnostic books; many such were current, and some of their readers already recognised Our Saviour as a third great prophet. There were also prophetic books, said to be due to angelic inspiration, handed about. Finally in 610 Mahomet believed that he had received from the Angel Gabriel a direct commission as a prophet. From this time began the secret dictation to his friends (he could

[1] It is, I think, admitted that no extant lives of the prophet can with certainty be referred to a date earlier than the beginning of the ninth century of our era, although these are no doubt based on much earlier material. Arabia was essentially a land of traditions and of the oral telling of tales, and Arabic the language of metaphor and poetry. Under such conditions, how can we be sure of any of the facts in the early history of Islam? We can, in most places, only follow the received version of that history. (See Bury's Gibbon, v., 512.)

[2] Or perhaps have listened to their reading; the prophet's ability to read is doubtful; certainly he was ill-educated.

not write himself) of the 'Koran' ('thing read' or 'thing recited'). This is a collection of isolated sentences or chapters, issued to his disciples according to the circumstances in which the prophet found himself; thus, if at one time it enjoins mercy to non-believers, at another time it commands to slay. There was no authoritative text of it until the middle of the seventh century, when one was issued by the fourth caliph, Othman.

At first Mahomet only conceived that he had a national mission, to purge the Kaaba and all Arabia of idol worship; indeed, to the end of his life, it may be considered doubtful whether he really wished to extend his power beyond the bounds of Arabian nationality. If he in later years sent threatening messages to Greeks and Persians, it may have meant merely that he believed their officials to be harbouring Arab rebels against his authority. But, as far as his own country was concerned, there was a political ideal, side by side with the religious ideal, from the first; he meant to be master of Arabia in the name of a mandate from on high. The first 'believers' ('Mussulman' = believer) were members of his own household; the next were his nearer friends. His father-in-law, Abu-Bekr, afterwards first caliph, was the first to preach the mission openly. Hostility, railing and persecution at once followed, especially from his own clan of the Koreish, who feared the loss of their privileges at the Kaaba. But adhesions followed also, and religious factions began to appear in the fighting clans of Mecca. In 616 there passed to his side the bravest and fiercest of the aristocracy, Omar, afterwards second caliph.

The New Faith, if indeed there was anything new in pure monotheism, had by this time got the name of 'Islam,' *i.e.*, abandonment to the Will of God. It was simple in the extreme:—Allah is almighty; He rewards and punishes in a material Heaven and Hell of eternity. Mahomet is the Prophet of God, superseding all others, for there have been others, Abraham, Moses and Jesus; there is a hierarchy of angels, good, fallen and bad; there are demons or spirits all round us called 'djins,' 'afreets'

(fairies). The only ritual is prayer, fasting, alms, pilgrimage, except when a *jehad* (holy war) is proclaimed, when fighting is a ritual. The Decalogue of the Old Testament is in force. Mahomet in fact borrows several ideas from the old Jewish scriptures, but more, especially the swift entry to Paradise for true believers, from the Talmud. His God is a King not a Father; He is a tribal God, the Jahweh of the Old Testament writers in His very worst mood. Much also is borrowed, besides the inferiority of women, from old heathenism, for the *afreets* and the like are only the old idols of the Arab race; something from Christianity, *e.g.*, mercy towards slaves, the doctrine of brotherhood and of equality of all (believers) in the sight of God; but, in detail, more from the Apocryphal Gospels than from the New Testament. But above all the New Faith was built so as to appeal to the best and worst instincts of the Arab races, their simplicity, their patriotism, their lust for fighting and for women. Islam has of course been much glossed and corrupted in places; but, probably because there has been no priesthood, its groundwork has hardly been shifted at all. If rationalistic explanations have sometimes crept in, they have always been liable to be overset by a revival of pure Islam, and the *imaums* (teachers or holy men) who date from the caliphate of Omar, have been singularly free from new doctrines.

At first belief in Allah and himself was all Mahomet asked;[1] and this the magic of his personality rapidly obtained. 'God would fight for his own,' and the Prophet was ready to face all odds and all prejudice. As the prejudice of Mecca seemed for the moment invincible, he began to think of appealing for support to some other Arabian city. At Yatreb (later called Medina) the citizens had heard from the Jews that a Messiah was near, and began to inquire if Mahomet were he. Meetings were held with Yatrebites, and, by an agreement of a very prosaic nature, the latter definitely undertook the protec-

[1] 'My child, when the angels ask thee who thou art,' he says to his dying son, 'thus shalt thou answer:—"God is my God, the Prophet of God was my Father, and my faith was Islam."'

tion of the prophet and his friends without committing themselves to complete belief. Mecca looked upon this agreement as a declaration of war, and all the 'Mahometans' in it streamed away to Medina — the Prophet and two faithful friends the last of all—in fear of their lives, and by devious paths. His favourite wife Ayesha[1] used in after years to tell the story of this 'Hegira'[2]:—'I had never seen my father, Abu Bekr, weep before; but he wept tears of joy when my husband asked him to be one of his companions in the flight.'

It was the 20th September 622, and the Prophet was in his fifty-second or fifty-third year.

Even in Medina believers were at first few, of whom perhaps not a hundred were exiles from Mecca; but they built a mosque and recognised the Prophet not only as the Prophet but as supreme judge and captain of all believers. The sovereignty of one man, uniting in his own person supreme power in Church and State, was thus of the essence of Islam. For some five years from the Hegira little progress was made; there was civil war between Mecca and Medina, and blood was shed upon both sides. In the course of this the Prophet, though not displaying much courage himself, put forward the leading principle of the Faith, that all who fall for Islam go straight to Paradise. He had been most anxious to win over the Jews, and many of the leaves of the Koran preach toleration both to them and to Christians; but when the Jews of Medina got tired of him (and he was by no means their idea of a Messiah), his attitude towards them changed, and, indeed, power and fighting were rapidly changing his character for the worse. In 627 the Meccans took the offensive and appeared in some force before Medina; but Mahomet put on a bold front, and entrenched his few followers outside the town so strongly

[1] Kadishah had died in 619. The Prophet had some thirteen enumerated wives in all, and endless other connections with women.

[2] The 'era' of the Hegira was established by Caliph Omar in 637 or 638. It was upon the same day 1248 years afterwards that the Italian troops entered Rome and put an end to the temporal sovereignty of the Pope.

that the enemy thought it prudent to retire. This was the first great victory. It converted all Medina except the Jews, and on the Jews the Prophet took a bloody vengeance. Moreover the 'sign from heaven' of this victory made the Meccans waver, and more and more of the aristocracy joined him each month. In 628 he went with 2000 armed followers to Mecca, performed his pilgrimage and returned safe. In 630 with five times that number he entered the capital as Lord and Master, destroyed all the idols in the Kaaba except the Black Stone, abolished all the privileges of the aristocracy, and proclaimed that all Mussulmans were brothers. He did not abolish slavery or the social side of the clan-system, but henceforth the absence of any hereditary aristocracy is one of the most marked characteristics of Mohammedan countries. The Prophet held no court, but lived with the utmost simplicity and freed all his own slaves.

Two years, and two only of autocracy were granted to Mahomet, and it is impossible to say what his further intentions may have been. Arabia itself was by no means united in his favour; there may have been places in it which had hardly heard his message. To Greeks, Persians, and Abyssinians he had sent missionaries proclaiming his prophetship and demanding the surrender of rebels—perhaps also demanding acceptance of himself, but neither the Emperor nor the Great King had paid any attention to them. Some sort of armed conflict with the Greeks had happened before 632, and Islam had not been victorious. And when in that year the Prophet died the death of all men, and was not visibly rapt away to Heaven in a whirlwind, there was not only an instant revolt of many Arab tribes, but a very large crop of False Prophets; Islam was almost wrecked before it was well launched. Obviously it was for someone to claim to be Mahomet's successor, though he had nominated none.

Several claims were in fact at once put forward, both among the 'Companions' of the Hegira and among those who had protected him at Medina. If heredity were to be reckoned, Ali, the husband of his daughter Fatima, had

the best claim. But both Abu Bekr and Omar were his fathers-in-law, and each commanded more voices than Ali; according to one story it came to a courtesy-strife between them, each seeking to prefer the other. Finally Abu-Bekr was elected, and took the title of 'Caliph' (Lieutenant of the Prophet of God). He reigned for but two years at Medina (632-4), and needed all his time and firmness to put down the revolts in Arabia, against which he took ruthless vengeance. He saw too that a foreign war of conquest was the safest means of appealing to Arab pride and greed, and he began wars with Persia and the Roman Empire at once. With Persia this history will have little more to do; its connection with the Roman Empire or any of its children is at an end. It was quickly overrun, though the Persians fought bravely, and in it were founded the first great military colonies of the New Faith. Trade followed the flag, and the opening of the great trade-route to the Persian Gulf benefited not only the Arab merchants, but all European markets as well. Eastwards the prospects of Islam seemed illimitable.

Westwards for the first century they seemed hardly less. Omar succeeded as caliph at Medina in 634, a man of perfect integrity and simplicity, and a born leader of men. His greatest effort was at once directed against the Roman province of Syria. Four armies were set in the field, and a Greek force was annihilated near Gaza; then, by the 'pilgrims'' road (east of the Dead Sea), the Moslem pressed on towards Damascus. Once they were driven back for Heraclius was not wholly unprepared, but in 635 they came again. Syria was quite ready; the native Syrian had always been too lazy, too low in the human scale to benefit by Græco-Roman civilisation; while the really intelligent population, the Jews, had been far more persecuted from Constantinople than ever they were likely to be from Mecca. Bostra, the southern outpost of Syria fell, and then

the rose-red city half as old as time

was the first great conquest of Islam. There was no massacre and no persecution. Churches were to be spared

—indeed for eighty years St John's at Damascus was shared as a place of worship between Christian and Moslem. Tribute was to be paid and a poll tax on every Christian—not so heavy, thought some Christians, as the Roman land-tax. Omar's simple plan, which contributed much to sustain the advance of his people, was to give four-fifths of all booty to the army which won the battle, and to pay the other fifth into the treasury, which then distributed it, in endowments or pensions, to the 'Companions' of the Hegira and other Arab warriors.

Heraclius was not the man to submit without a struggle, and he gathered a large force at Antioch, which was entirely defeated at Gadara. From Damascus, southwards towards Palestine and eastwards towards the Euphrates, the Arab warriors carried all before them. The Greek governor, after a valiant fight outside the walls of Jerusalem, fled to Egypt, and the Holy City, True Cross and all, was surrendered by its patriarch to the caliph in person (636). Antioch followed in 638, and the taking of Cæsarea completed the conquest of Syria. By what tactics or strategy, if any at all, the early victories of Islam were won, we have no means of knowing. The Byzantine army, though not yet nearly as good as it was to be a century or two later, still preserved the defensive armour, the discipline, and the tactics of Rome. Both Maurice and Heraclius had been soldiers of merit, and Maurice especially was a military reformer, who thought and wrote on strategical problems. But those who remember the impact of the Dervishes of the Soudan on British squares in Egypt at the end of the nineteenth century, will wonder the less at the success which the pure fanaticism of the Arabs of the seventh century obtained. When the only thing to be done, to win the everlasting and very material joys of their Paradise, was to kill and be killed by their enemy, they went and did it. They charged in clouds of light horsemen on centre and on wings and they counted no odds, however great, against them.

It was more than unfortunate that, in addition to the recent Persian war, the dominions of the emperor had

been suffering from a new and acute attack of religious frenzy. Heraclius had been trying over again the hopeless task of Zeno and Anastasius, the reconciliation of those who held that Christ had one nature with those who held that He had two. The formula was invented that in Him had been two natures, but only one θέλημα, ἐνέργεια (will or 'energy'). Hence the new heresy—for a heresy in Western eyes it at once became—was called the 'Monothelite.' The 'Ecthesis,' or explanation in which the emperor put forward his new doctrine, was even received by Pope Honorius, though rejected everywhere else in the West. This pope's memory was subsequently condemned for the reception, a fact which has induced sceptics to question the doctrine of the infallibility of popes. Heraclius was for other reasons unpopular at Rome, for he had once told his exarch to seize the treasure of the Lateran Palace and to ship it to Constantinople, to provide for the defences of that city. He had family troubles too; he married his own wicked niece, and tried to prefer her children (by Roman law illegitimate), for the succession, to his own son by an earlier marriage. He died in 641, and his eldest son Constantine III. died in the same year. His grandson, Constans II., was recognised by one party and held Chalcedon, while the wicked niece's son Heracleon held Constantinople. From the death of Heraclius to the accession of Leo III. in 717 the Eastern portion of the Roman Empire seemed to be going wholly to pieces, except during the useful reign of Constantine IV. (668-85). A human deluge of Bulgarians swept over Thrace, and even besieged Thessalonica twice.

And in 641 the fierce Moslem warrior Amru was conquering Egypt, somewhat against the will of Caliph Omar who at least peremptorily stopped him from going on to Roman Africa. Egypt was treated in a more bloody and ruthless fashion than Syria. Alexandria capitulated in 641 and, being too near the sea, gave place as a capital to Amru's new foundation of Cairo. Egypt swarmed with heretics, who, on the whole, preferred the contemptuous toleration of the Moslem to the persecutions of the Ortho-

dox Church; to the *fellaheen* it mattered little that their corn was now exported to Mecca instead of Constantinople; and Amru at least re-dug Trajan's canal from the Nile to Klysma on the Red Sea.

And so we have nearly reached the middle of the seventh century. A boy of eleven, Constans II., is on the East-Roman throne, Heracleon and his mother having come to a bad and rapid end. Lombard dukes and kings, weak popes and weaker exarchs are struggling in Italy. The last great Merovingian King of the Franks, Dagobert, is just dead. The Gothic kings in Spain are striving desperately with their own rebel nobles. The whole riches of Persia, Syria and Egypt are in the hands of the warlike 'Emirs' or viceroys, who are extending the Empire of Islam. One of these rules at Damascus, builds a fleet at the Syrian Tripoli, takes Cyprus, and will soon (652) take Rhodes; his advanced guards have penetrated Armenia on the north and the Isaurian highlands in the south-west of Asia Minor. Another of them rules at Cairo and has designs on Roman Africa. If Omar had lived ten more years, Constantinople might have had to stand a siege worse than that laid by the Avars and Persians. But the great caliph was murdered by a slave in 644, and the first of many contests for the headship of Islam began.

It was a contest between Ali and Othman, both sons-in-law of Mahomet, and ended in a long civil war. Othman, a quiet peaceable person, was the candidate of the Koreishites of Mecca, Ali the candidate of the warlike 'Companions' of the Prophet. Othman was successful and ruled for twelve troubled years, till in 656 he was murdered by the friends of Ali. Ali then ruled as caliph, but the Prophet's widow, Ayesha, who still lived, was jealous of him, and prolonged the contest by means of the Emir of Damascus, Moaviah. This struggle already foreshadowed the division into an Eastern and a Western caliphate. The Koreishite aristocracy as a whole had only accepted the Prophet perforce, and represented distinctly the worldly and political element in Moslem society; Moaviah's own ancestor Ommiah had been among the early enemies of

the Prophet. Ali, on the other hand, though now grown fat and mild, had been a Hegira-man pure and simple, a man of 'Holy War' and Faith.[1]

In the course of the contest, which lasted till Ali's murder in 661, we meet the first recognition by any Mussulman of the supremacy of the Roman Empire, for Moaviah at Damascus, wishing to have his hands free for civil war, agreed not only to give up all aggressions to the north-west but also to pay tribute to the Emperor Constans. This man, a grim, silent creature, took the tribute and took also a practical view of the situation. Without disclosing his ulterior designs, if indeed he had any, he went on a tour of inspection to Southern Italy with a small fleet and army in 661. Perhaps he was considering the question of removing the seat of government to Sicily, or to some southern Italian port—to Rome itself? He might recover Italy from the Lombards, Egypt from the Emir? At least he might provide for the defence of Carthage and Roman Africa? In the course of his tour he visited Rome and spent twelve days there. It fluttered the gentle breast of the pope not a little to have to entertain his lawful sovereign in the city which had hardly seen an emperor since Honorius. *Inter alia* Constans stripped the bronze roof of the Pantheon and carried its tiles with him to Sicily. Of warlike deeds he did little, and a mere Lombard duke had small difficulty in defending Benevento against him. In Sicily he spent the remainder of his life, and there in 668 a slave knocked him on the head with a soap-dish in his bath. His schemes, whatever they were, died with him; it would be interesting to learn what his thoughts may have been. In Constantinople his son

[1] It is the party of Ali who, under the name of Shiites, have maintained till our own days the one serious schism in Islam. The Persian Mahometans are 'Shiites' to-day, all other Moslems being 'Sunnites.' The last descendants of Ali and Fatima (*i.e.*, the race of Mahomet) died out late in the ninth century, and the true Shiite believes that the latest of them will one day 'come again.' Several minor Mahometan dynasties in Africa and Asia at different times have been Shiite, rejecting both the Ommiad and Abbassid caliphs, and, it is needless to say, rejecting with equal fervour the Ottomans.

Constantine IV. ('Pogonatus,' the bearded) succeeded to the throne.

Meanwhile Moaviah's scruples had ended with the end of the civil war at Ali's death. He was recognised as caliph, though by no means without grudging: his successors, fourteen in number, are the 'Ommiad' caliphs, who ruled at Damascus till 750.[1] Descendants of Ali lived for two centuries; but the active opposition to the Ommiads was kept up by the family of Abbas, uncle of the Prophet; these men preached steadily that the Ommiads were never quite 'true believers,' and finally, with that cry, overthrew them in 749. True believers or not, it was in Moaviah's caliphate that a Moslem fleet first appeared in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. In 671, and for seven successive years, such a fleet appeared, although no regular siege of the Imperial capital followed. There was some fighting in the Sea of Marmora, oftener off the southern and western coasts of Asia Minor. But on the whole the Greeks had the victory, for they drove off their enemy with the celebrated 'Greek fire,' *πῦρ θαλάσσιον*, which they squirted through squirts or tubes (*διὰ τῶν σιφώνων*). The Latin chronicler of the tenth century, Liutprand, calls these tubes 'the argument' which threw the fire, and says the Greek vessels were equipped with them not only on the bows but on the stern and on both sides as well. But he adds that it would be difficult (*incommodum*) to use it except in calm weather.[2] There are probably now chemists who would tell us either what the composition of this destructive substance was, or that it could never have existed at all, but I have not read their works;[3] its contemporaries assert it to have been a missile

[1] The four orthodox caliphs are Abu Bekr (632); Omar (634); Othman (644); Ali (656); all nominally ruling from Medina and Mecca, though Ali had really retired to Kufa on the Euphrates. Then follow the fourteen Ommiads from Moaviah to Mervan II. (661-749), ruling from Damascus. [2] Liutprand, *Antapodosis*, v., 15.

[3] Professor Bury (Gibbon, vol. vi., 9, 10, 540) decides for more than one kind of fire, and believes it (on the authority of a Greek treatise of the ninth century, preserved in a Latin translation, and quoted in Höfer, *Histoire de la Chimie*, 1842) to have been propelled by *true*

fire which could not be quenched by water. The Emperor Constantine IV. was a valiant man and a clever man; he pacified popes, beat back Bulgars and Slavs, and divided what was left of his empire into military districts called *θέματα* or Themes, few in number at first, but increasing in time to seventeen in Asia and ten in Europe. Each had a permanent local garrison, and each contributed a quota of troops to the Imperial army.

With this change, the last vestige of the Roman provincial and municipal organisation of Asia Minor vanished, and all became Græco-Asiatic. Justinian's code indeed remained in force, but even before his own death its author had realised that it had been written in an alien language, and had begun to issue his new edicts in Greek. Early in the eighth century the code itself was superseded by a new jurisprudence enunciated in the *Ecloga* of Leo III. ('the Isaurian'), which was professedly based upon Christian principles. A new kind of patriotism sprang up in the 'Greek Empire,' as we may now begin definitely to call it. The change had been long in preparation; the campaigns of Maurice and Heraclius had been the first symptoms of it. The mercenaries, allies, or *fœderati* of Justinian's time steadily disappeared from the army. The main reliance was placed on Asiatic provincials, especially those from the highlands of Cappadocia, Armenia and Isauria; and, alone of the European soldiers, the Thracians remained useful. Whenever these troops were well led they held their own against the Moslem 'Saracens'[1] on the frontiers of Asia Minor. In the main their battles were those of cavalry against cavalry; and the Byzantine 'heavies' at least led the Saracens to adopt defensive armour of fine ring-mail, for the manufacture of which Damascus soon became famous.

Few or no troops could, however, be spared to defend

gunpowder. He believes that inflammable oils were so propelled, and concludes that the Greeks 'just fell short of revolutionising warfare by failing to apply their propelling power to leaden missiles.'

[1] This name as a generic one for Moslem armies in Hither Asia, just as 'Moors' is a generic name for them in Western Europe, dates from the end of the seventh century.

Roman Africa, and the turn of that unhappy province was soon to come. The Arab camel-riders were well fitted to traverse the sands which separate Egypt from Cyrene and Cyrene again from the Carthaginian Peninsula. No records remain of the final fate of Cyrene; but in the year in which I write (1910-11) the ruins of that great colony are being for the first time explored, and we may hope to hear of great discoveries there. Kairouan, or Kirwan 'the Holy,' was founded in the *hinterland* of Africa, as an Arab military colony in 670. The onward march of Islam was again interrupted in 680, on the death of Moaviah, by a fresh strife for the caliphate, although Moaviah's son Yezid had been recognised as successor in his father's lifetime. But when Constantine IV. died in 685, the throne of Constantinople passed to a very different man, his son Justinian II. Justinian alternately blandished and quarrelled with the caliphs at Damascus, who accordingly used him as he deserved; he tried also to blandish the savage Bulgars and Slavs, and to raise from them a private army, which should be independent of the national contingents from the themes. The result was that the new Caliph Abdul Melik attacked Asia Minor in 692 and Armenia was lost. His own capital then rose against Justinian (who had proved himself at home a monster of cruelty), cut off half his nose, and sent him to exile on the northern shore of the Black Sea.

Good as it was to get rid of such a ruffian, civil disputes were certain to weaken the resisting power of the Empire, and the revolution happened just when Abdul Melik had crushed a rival caliph, conquered Mecca, and taken up again the twice deferred attack on Africa (692). Africa had indeed never recovered from Justinian's wars. There were few Roman 'institutions' to overthrow either there or in Syria or Egypt; the government had long been merely a taxing machine. We have seen the Vandals in the last years of their rule, barely able to hold off the savage Berber tribes of the Aures Mountains, and since the Roman reconquest, the inroads of these tribes had progressed apace. Nearly all the Western Province (Mauritania

Tingitana, *i.e.*, Tangiers and district) had relapsed to barbarism; and now practically no resistance at all was made to the Arabs. Once in 697 a Greek fleet won back Carthage for a few months; but the caliph sent a stronger fleet the next year and drove the Christians away. The Berbers indeed gave the new conquerors some trouble; a queen called Kahina arose among them in Numidia and defeated a great Moslem army, but as she also warred against all traces of Roman civilisation and based her resistance on primitive humanity, the relics of the Roman population were actually obliged to help the Moslem against her. When she was beaten, her people readily accepted Islam and, though often in revolt, became one of its best right hands; they were a warlike race, originally of European descent, but brutalised by centuries of warfare with civilisations superior to their own, Phœnician, Roman, Vandal, Arab.

My readers, each according to his temperament, comparative or contrastive, may compare or contrast the history of the conquests of Islam with that of the conquests of Rome. No doubt, just in the same way as Rome, when she extended her arms and her laws to the four airts of heaven, gradually ceased to be altogether Roman, so now the Arabs, as they drove in under Islam tribes more savage than themselves, barbarised their own habits, their warfare, their religion; Saracen had been worse than Arab, Berber was to be worse than Saracen, Turk than Berber. Rome, however, had taken more centuries to mature than Islam had taken lustres; Rome began with the sword, but after the sword had a peace and a law to give you; Islam had only the sword, and when it had fleshed its sword on you, could only tell you to go and flesh yours on someone else. But it was an amazingly sharp sword; within fifty-two years from the Hegira the caliphate had reached its furthest Eastern limits (the Indus and the Oxus); it was a little slower in the West, but within a hundred and ten years from the Hegira it was already shrinking in Gaul; while its northern limit, the Caspian Sea, took only seventy-eight years to reach. Yet, having

no institutions, no temporal and very questionable spiritual blessings to confer upon the conquered, it soon lost all control over its far-flung line. Emir after Emir had to be created to rule the newly won provinces, and Emirs soon came to snap their fingers at the distant caliph. For conquered Africa a new Emir had now to be appointed, and he, whose name was Musa, pushed rapidly on from Carthage towards Tangier and the setting sun. He built a fleet, which began by raiding Sicily and Sardinia and taking the Balearic Isles; Spain was already in danger when the eighth century opened.

I have said above that we hardly know who was the last Gothic king of old Christian Spain; he may have been called Witiza or he may have been called Roderick. The 'received' story of the Moslem conquest comes to us from Arab sources of the ninth and later centuries and presents great difficulties.[1] Two almost contemporary Spanish chroniclers tell a very different tale, yet one so meagre as to be almost unintelligible. But it is probably true that at Ceuta on the African coast, opposite Gibraltar, there was a Christian garrison, which was holding out when the Emir Musa took Tangier early in the eighth century. This may have been held by Greeks (*i.e.*, Roman-African provincials), or it may have been held by a Gothic count called Julian. This Julian may have desired a private revenge against a king of Spain (whose name may have been Roderick) and may have therefore 'invited the Moors'; but how often have we not had to question similar stories of the invitation of barbarians, into Italy by Honoria, by Eudoxia, by Narses, into Africa by Boniface? Another view is that the whole invasion was engineered by the Jews, who, cruelly persecuted by the Gothic bishops, were to be found in all the Spanish cities. There is good reason to believe that Judaism was the creed of many of the Berbers in Africa before the arrival of the Moslem. More certainly there would be, before the year 711, both commercial

[1] A wholesale destruction of Arabic literature was ordered by the Catholic sovereigns who drove out the Moors at the end of the fifteenth century; Cardinal Ximenes is believed to have destroyed eighty thousand volumes at Granada alone.

intercourse and raids as well, between Africa and Spain across the narrow Straits. In that year at any rate one Tarik, a dependent of Musa, and perhaps a Berber by birth, suddenly appears as giving his name to the Rock of Gibraltar (Jebel-Tarik), mastering the garrison of Cordova, and beating in fair fight a great Gothic army at Xeres,[1] a place whose name a Spaniard pronounces 'Heraith' and an Englishman 'Sherry.'

Cordova and several of the Southern cities made gallant defence, but Toledo, the capital, seems to have been deserted by the Christian population, and the Jews welcomed Tarik when he appeared before the walls. Of any resistance in the North-East hardly even a legend remains, and in 712 Musa appeared, to scold Tarik and to take over the great conquest. Arab tradition has a charming story of how he himself in his old age, and after being disgraced at the court of Damascus, spoke of his own career. The caliph cross-examined him as to the qualities of the various nations with whom he had fought. He said he could not remember all their names, for they were so many; but of the Greeks he had a poor opinion; 'they were lions within their castles, eagles on their horses, women on their ships. If they see an opportunity they seize it, but if the day turns against them they are goats in ascending their mountains, so swift-footed in flight that they can hardly see the land they tread. . . . The Berbers are, of all foreign nations, most like to us Arabs in impetuosity, strength, endurance, military science and generosity, but the most treacherous people on earth. . . . The people of Ishban (Spain) are luxurious and dissolute lords, but they are knights who do not turn their faces from the enemy. . . . The Franks, oh Commander of the Faithful, have numbers, resources, strength and valour. . . . Among all the nations with whom I have fought there are men of honour and probity, there are also traitors and knaves; we met them all, each man according to his temper.'[2]

[1] Xeres is only two leagues distant from Cadiz.

[2] So Gayangos, *Hist. of Mahommedan Dynasties in Spain*,

It is clear that in Spain Musa repressed all resistance ruthlessly, but gave good terms where none was made. In fifteen months all the peninsula except its north-western corner was at his feet. No doubt it suited Musa to be quick, for we find the caliph suspecting his loyalty, even as Justinian had suspected the loyalty of Belisarius. The Gothic 'treasure,' which perhaps was the thing on which Musa set most value, was despatched on camels to Damascus. Even at this day there are still a few wild camels roaming in the delta of the Guadalquivir; were they left by the Moors or were they imported to Spain at some later date? No new Emirate was created in Moorish Spain, but 'Valis,' or lieutenants of Musa, ruled first at Seville then at Cordova. Toleration for Christians was granted everywhere in return for tribute. Such unsubdued Goths as there were betook themselves to the Asturias Mountains in the North-West; there is a tradition that this exodus was led by the Archbishop of Toledo in person. It is most improbable that the Moors ever made any attempt to follow them up there. There was better plunder, they thought, across the Pyrenees, and over they went. The southern coast of Gaul was quickly overrun, and Narbonne fell in 720. Duke Eudo (Hugh) of Aquitaine beat them back from the walls of Toulouse, but they passed on north, and, in 725, reached and destroyed the old Roman capital of central Gaul, Autun. That, as we shall see, was destined to be their limit, though, after beating Eudo on the Dordogne, they again advanced in 732 towards the Loire, no doubt with designs on the rich shrine of the blessed St Martin at Tours. Thus in the West the fate of Christendom was trembling in the balance.

It was equally trembling in the East. There is gore of a more than usually Byzantine type to be waded through before we reach the crisis there. Leontius, who succeeded the banished Justinian, was deposed in 698; his successor, Tiberius III., fought bravely in Asia Minor, and even got into Syria. But in 705 the exiled Justinian II., who had

I. Appx. lxxxviii., quoting an anonymous Arab MS. of twelfth century.

meanwhile got a false nose of gold in the place of the one his subjects had cut off, and had been making friends with Turks on the Volga and with Bulgars, was brought back by an army of the latter savages and reseated on the Byzantine throne. He then put most of his leading subjects to various forms of grizzly death, put out the eyes of his Patriarch (observe the harmonious working of Church and State at Constantinople), and went on till 711; whenever he blew his gold nose it was the signal for an execution. He was followed by several unimportant shadows of emperors during the next six years. Meanwhile Caliph Welid I., whose domains now stretched from the Indus to the Atlantic, had begun a great triple advance on Constantinople, by sea, by Tyana the key of the Southern road, and by Heraclea-of-Pontus the key of the Northern road.

The imminence of the danger called to the Greek throne a hero and saviour in the person of Leo III., called 'the Isaurian,' really perhaps a Cilician or a Syrian by birth. He was an old soldier of Justinian II., and had fought valiantly against the Moslem. For a wonder he ascended the throne in 717 without bloodshed and did not put even his predecessor to death. The debt that civilisation owes to him is greater even than that which it owes to Heraclius. The siege of Constantinople began at once, both by land and sea, and lasted for a year. Maslama the Arab leader contrived to get across the Straits and to beleaguer the city walls. But the strange medley of races that lived within those walls seems to have been always capable of being galvanised for their defence. The Greek fire ran blazing over the hostile galleys. The Thracian winter agreed ill with the children of the sun and desert. In August 718 Maslama drew his starved and shattered remnants away.

The hero who saved Christianity and civilisation has never got his deserts for the simple reason that his subsequent career did not please the churchmen who wrote history.[1] Leo the 'Isaurian' was also Leo the

[1] So much was this the case that, though Leo and his son Constantine V. made a serious attempt to bring the jurisprudence

'Iconoclast' (image-breaker). He and his successor embarked on a much needed crusade against the gross superstitions of the age, especially against the worship of 'sacred' pictures and wonder-working images; incidentally also against pilgrimages, relic-worship, and other 'works of supererogation.' In fact they anticipated the Reformation, in an age which desired nothing so little as to be reformed. It is probable that this puritanism or rationalism, call it which you will, of Leo's was derived from contact with the Arabs, whose simple creed was true to the very letter of the Second Commandment. We shall see some of the details and results of the Iconoclastic movement later on; for the present we can only note that it was an unfortunate time to begin it, for it undoubtedly divided Christendom in the face of militant Islam. Between 727 and 732 Islam was again overrunning much of Asia Minor, and if we want Christian comfort against it, we must turn back to the story of Gaul.

There we long ago left Charles Martel, in the very year of Leo's accession, master as yet only of Austrasia, but beginning to make his power felt in Neustria also. The shadowy Merovingian king, Chilperic III., had fled south of the Loire, and was living on Duke Eudo of Aquitaine. In 720 Charles was preparing to cross the Loire to catch his king, when Eudo, threatened by the Moorish invasion, thought it prudent to hand over his royal guest to Charles. In getting possession of him, Charles, as 'Mayor of the Palace,' got all power over Neustria; he may in return have sent Eudo help against the Moors, but if so, we hear nothing of it. And it is certain that, for the next twelve years, Charles left

of the Empire into harmony with the ecclesiastical views on marriage and on the substitution of mutilation for death as the penalty for crime, though they abolished serfdom and did much to mitigate the hardships of the poor, these laws did not last more than a century and a half. Basil the 'Macedonian' who came to the Eastern throne in 867 restored the jurisprudence of Justinian, though not in its entirety yet in its main features, with applause; and this can only be attributed to the rancorous hatred borne by the ecclesiastics to the memory of the idol-breaking emperors.

Southern Gaul entirely to its fate, and turned his whole attention to his own Eastern frontier. On that frontier, and within Neustria and Austrasia at least, if not in the old kingdom of Burgundy, he was all-powerful. The *grandes* and *fideles* were his *grandes* and *fideles;* he nominated bishops and deposed bishops; he even gave their lands to his warriors on condition of future military service. One might almost call such gifts by the later feudal name of *beneficia.* Indifference to the advance of the Moors was a very strange attitude for Charles to take; we cannot attribute it to a deliberate foresight that his own power was not yet sufficiently consolidated to cope with Islam, or that the conversion of heathen Germany was the more important task; still less can we plead papal orders, for, of all his race, Charles alone cared nothing for popes. We must rather suppose, either that he expected Eudo to make a good fight for it on his own legs, or that he quite undervalued the Moorish danger.

Anyhow from 720 to 732, and indeed till his death in 741, Charles was mainly interested in supporting with the Frank sword the advance of the Irish, Scottish and Anglo-Saxon missionaries in the moorlands of Frisia, the forests of Westphalia and Central Germany. The first missionary impulse in these regions had perhaps been felt when Gregory the Great recommended to Queen Brunhilda the men whom he was sending to convert the English. At the same period we have St Columbanus preaching to Franks and Lombards, and his companion St Gallus tarrying behind him in the ruins of the Roman city of Brigantia, on the Lake of Constanz, and founding hard by the monastery that bears his name, 'Saint-Gall.' Next there is the mission of St Amandus to the Frisians in the middle of the seventh century; a little later St Rupert preaches far into and even beyond Bavaria and founds Salzburg[1] as a bishropric. But, as for Frankish bishops themselves

[1] In the wonderful rock fortress which towers above that city there is a charming representation of St Rupert with a *salt-box* in his hand—the wealth of the region resting mainly upon its salt mines.

becoming or sending out missionaries, such a task was not to their taste at all; the Frankish Church was absorbed in secular business, and the Frank kings seemed to be totally indifferent. Thus, if ever anyone else had preached to Frisians, Saxons, Thuringians, Hessians, Alamans, either these had paid no attention or had lapsed into heathenism.[1] In the former province of Rhætia there may have been a few survivals of old Roman Christianity.

Now, however, a mighty impulse was at hand, Willibrod the Englishman, who founded the bishopric of Utrecht in 690 and continued to preach in Frisia till his death in 739, being the pioneer. But Willibrod was soon to be entirely eclipsed by another Englishman, Winfrith or Boniface, acting under the direct patronage of the great Pope Gregory II. and of Charles Martel. His missionary activity, from his first visit to Frisia in 716 to his martyrdom there in 756, covers forty years. His first visit to Rome was in 718. Pippin had no doubt protected his beginnings; Charles, generally in warfare with the savage Frisians, at once saw in him a valuable ally. When Boniface, whom Gregory II. had consecrated as missionary bishop without a see in 722, hewed down the 'holy oak' of the Hessians near Fritzlar, the bold deed must have been done under the ægis of Charles Martel. Ten years later Gregory III. created Boniface an archbishop with power to carve out dioceses, consecrate bishops and be supreme over the infant German Church. This new power was not wholly pleasing to such German bishroprics as already existed, *e.g.*, Salzburg,[2] but all soon submitted, and we have the rapid foundation of sees at Erfurt, Eichstadt, Würzburg, Strassburg, Constanz, Augsburg, Regensburg, Freisingen, Passau; above all of the great abbey of Fulda, the first abbey to be exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. Remember that every one of these foundations, besides being a lamp in a dark forest of

[1] One must always remember that Germany was still a land of dense forests separating tribe from tribe.

[2] If, indeed, that had not been overthrown by Avars or some other heathens.

heathenism, was a buttress of the civil power of the Frank ruler. If in the South of Europe the faith at its first appearance had been to some extent in conflict with culture, to the Northern nations it came as the handmaid of culture; it necessitated for all who would set it forth a Latin education. The conversion of Southern and West-central Germany was almost as rapid as that of England had been; and, as the impulse to it came either primarily or secondarily from the Papacy (whose claims to supremacy were now fully formulated), both Germany and England accepted that supremacy, together with monasticism, image-worship, relic-worship, and the duty of pilgrimages, as essentials of the Christian faith. Thus Rome had made a mighty stride.

So had the Frankish power. There was no possible Christian rival to it in Germany. One sturdy set of heathen tribes, the Saxons, were as yet proof against the Word, and were for the present untouched by the sword also, but their turn for submission to both would come. Meanwhile, before the end of his life Charles Martel had chased his old Frisian friends right into their islands, at the mouths of Scheldt and Rhine, always hurling missionary after missionary at their heads.

And he had done other work for Christendom too. Eudo of Aquitaine had been a treacherous fellow, and had even dabbled in Hispano-Moorish politics; there were plenty of disputes and civil wars between the *Valis* in the Spanish Peninsula tempting him to interfere. But, when a great Moslem army under Abderrahman drove his Aquitanian troops before it, and advanced towards the gap of Poitiers, on the road to Tours, there was only one person on whom Eudo could call for help, and that was Charles. It was nearly three hundred years since Aëtius had been called from Italy to face a similar danger in Central Gaul; and the October Sunday battle of 732 near Poitiers (perhaps at Châtellerault) was a victory for civilisation only of less importance than Aëtius' defeat of Attila. The Franks, we are told, stood 'like a wall of ice,' and hewed Moorish heads in twain down to the

breast-bone. It is in this battle that Paul the Deacon tells us that 375,000 Saracens were slain. Charles won a complete victory, and those Moors who were left alive rolled back to the Pyrenees.

In 735 they came again and took Arles and Avignon; Charles retook both, though he failed to tear from them Narbonne, which was saved by their ships; for the old Roman city, now high and dry, seems to have retained some sort of harbour till the fourteenth century. When Charles died a tiny strip of the southern coast was all that the Moslem held north of the Pyrenees; Eudo's sons continued to hold Aquitaine and to give trouble to the sons of Charles. Though still only mayor of the palace, Charles acted entirely as if he were king of all the Franks. He beat down with a strong hand the turbulent bishops, who in some cases were actually trying to make their sees hereditary; he deposed and set up in Church and State whom he would, and, as I said above, he did not in the least scruple to give Church lands to laymen, to appoint faithful lay vassals to hold bishoprics. And when the Pope, as we shall soon see, asked him to come into Italy and fight the Lombards for him, he utterly refused. The Lombards were his very good friends.

It was, however, a great misfortune for Christendom that these three great Christian powers, Charles, Leo and the pope, could not combine against Islam. They might have done so if to the old doctrinal quarrels, monophysite and monothelite, had not now been added a new one about the worship of the 'holy images.' The seventh-century popes, as I have told you, were singularly undistinguished 'servants of the servants of God.'[1] The political antagonism between Rome and Constantinople was always there, and it had been sharpened by Heraclius' declaration in favour of Our Saviour's 'one will.' Pope Honorius had, indeed, accepted this, but all his successors utterly repudiated it. One of them, Pope Theodore, had the pleasure of welcoming to Rome a patriarch of Constantinople who came

[1] This title was first taken with proud humility by Gregory I.

to do penance for having believed it.[1] Constans II. vainly tried to stifle discussion, and dreamed of a 'Type' which should reconcile East and West; Pope Martin gathered a council which declared the 'Type' to be nothing better than sheer heresy. Thereon, Constans sent his exarch to seize Martin dead or alive; and Martin died a genuine martyr-in-will, in a Crimean exile (655). Constantine IV. went round the other way, renounced and condemned, in a great Eastern council in 680, the monothelite heresy. At the end of the century the popes died with such great, and even suspicious celerity, that the Imperial confirmation of their office seldom reached them in time. In 687 the exarch, to whom the task of confirmation was now turned over, tried to interfere in a disputed papal election, and found to his surprise that not only the Roman citizens had taken up arms to defend their candidate, but that the troops of Ravenna would not follow him to the field. It was a real national move of Italy against the East, and was the more remarkable from the fact that the favourite candidate of the Roman people, Sergius, was himself of Greek origin. From this time the allegiance even of the city of Ravenna to the emperor was extremely shaky; in the last year of Justinian's reign (710) it rose in revolt against him, and was cruelly handled in consequence. With the popes, however, this monster tried to keep friendly, and he received Pope Constantine as an honoured guest in 710. In the Pope's train there came to Constantinople another man, perhaps of Greek extraction but utterly Roman heart, who in 715 became Pope Gregory II.

With him, at his accession in 717, the Emperor Leo III., who was no monothelite, was perfectly friendly, and their good relations continued for nine years. It was indeed an age of darkness, that opening of the eighth century. Learning and letters were at their lowest ebb. The feeble flame, which the great eighth-century popes kept alight before the totally imaginary tombs of St Peter

[1] But when the patriarch returned to his own See he recanted his recantation, and was at once, and with horrid emphasis, excommunicated at Rome.

and St Paul, was fed by the grossest superstition. To that flame, which they believed could burn away their considerable sins, the eyes of all Western Europeans were more and more directed. For the real holy places of the Christian faith,

> Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
> Which seven hundred years ago were nailed
> For our advantage on the bitter cross,

were now far more difficult to reach, being in the power of the infidel, although pilgrimages to Palestine never quite ceased until the days of the Ottoman Turks. Rome no doubt gained enormously by the comparative dangers of the journey to Jerusalem. Anglo-Saxon kings were among its earliest and most zealous pilgrims; Cadwalla of Wessex in 688 is the first known instance; such men came not empty-handed, laid down their crowns and died as monks in Holy Rome. So close was the intercourse between Rome and England that our own Bede, who never left his Northumbrian monastery, was able to incorporate in the book he was writing in 724, the first part of the life of the reigning Pope from the *Liber Pontificalis*. What the pilgrims saw and heard was the worship of the Virgin and the Saints, which was rapidly superseding that of the Trinity; *redit et Virgo*. They saw heathen temples everywhere being stripped of roof and pillar to build Christian churches; even in the darkest seventh century, church building never stopped. When, a century before this, the Pantheon had been consecrated, eighteen (some say twenty-eight) cartloads of bones were transported to it from the catacombs. These pilgrims saw in their imagination not *Romam auream* but *Romam martyrum sanguine rubeam*. They saw the coming in of the crucifix as an actual object of worship; a fifth-century pilgrim would nowhere have seen, even in a picture, any representation of Christ *on* the Cross, but always in glory above it.

The puritan hero who sat on the throne of the East thought foul scorn of such means of grace. Good Christian as he was, he saw that this image- and relic-worship,

more than anything else, gave point to the taunt of idolatry levelled at Christians by the Mussulman and the Jew. The Jews, already often in high favour with the caliphs at Damascus, had persuaded their masters to insist on the exclusion of images and pictures from the churches of the Syrian and Egyptian Christians. Thus, when Leo's Edict of 725 insisted on a like measure throughout the Roman Empire, it was not wholly unexpected. His own patriarch Germanus was opposed to the measure; 'only a general council,' he said, 'could make such an order.' But the East as a whole might probably have agreed in the long run. The entire West was utterly hostile, from the first rumour of the thing. As for Pope Gregory he did not even propose to consult a council; he refused obedience and denounced anyone who should obey. But Leo was not more puritan than he was imperialist and despotic; he 'meant to be obeyed.' Unfortunately eighth-century human nature was too much for him. Thereupon he began a course of regrettable persecution, and Southern Italy was soon full of devout idolaters flying from Greece and Asia. Leo ordered his exarch to seize, banish, or even kill Gregory (at least so said Gregory) who knew, however, that the exarch was powerless, and that he had the whole of Italy and the West upon his side. The next emperor, Constantine V., to whom the rancour of the churchmen gave a foul nickname, was to be even more iconoclast, and much more cruel than his father. He would root out monkery as well as idolatry, and he issued edicts compelling monks and nuns to marry (not even Henry VIII. went this length); but this is anticipating events.

The attitude of Gregory II. was, throughout, most statesmanlike, and well calculated to enlist the sympathy of Europe. Certain very violent letters to the emperor have been attributed to him, and even so good a historian as Gregorovius accepts them as genuine; but the better opinion is that they are forgeries. The Pope had no need of such weapons. The powerful Lombard king Liutprand, although *qud* Lombard equally hostile to pope

and exarch, was *quâ* churchman enthusiastically devoted to the holy images. If Gregory had chosen to 'play for his own hand' he could have rent for ever, and with applause, the slender tie that bound Rome to Constantinople. But he utterly rejected all such suggestions. There should be resolute refusal to obey the Imperial commands, but there should be no usurpation of Imperial power on the part of Liutprand or anyone else, and no breach of allegiance. At least no such breach should come from him, Gregory; though no doubt he was pleased when Ravenna rose in revolt and slew its exarch. He was not so much pleased when Liutprand sacked and destroyed Classis, occupied the city of Ravenna and all the Pentapolis, and advanced towards Rome itself in 729. Gregory at once boldly warned the audacious Lombard to retire, for 'Rome belongs to the emperor'; and even terrified him into surrendering Ravenna again to the Greeks. We do not know what arguments he used, but they must have been wholly spiritual ones.

This great pope died in 731, and his successor Gregory III. was a Syrian by birth. Leo was seriously intending to reduce Italy by force after the method of Justinian; he was also thinking of a General Council, but the two plans would not fit well together. The Pope meanwhile called an Italian Council in Rome, and excommunicated the iconoclasts *in specie*, but apparently without naming Leo. Leo, while preparing his fleet, confiscated all the papal estates in Sicily. When one reflects that the Saracens had already been plundering both Sicily and Sardinia, and that Abderrahman was at this very moment marching towards the Loire, it is difficult to feel altogether pleased with the iconoclast emperor. Fortune, however, was against him; his fleet suffered a complete shipwreck, and it is small blame to Gregory III. that, in 739, he turned to the victorious Frank, Charles Martel, sent to him the keys of St Peter's tomb (we now begin to hear of these weapons as a mark of sovereignty in Rome), and, in short, offered to transfer the dominion of the city from the Greeks to the Franks.

It is small blame I say to Gregory; but it is surely a matter for the highest praise to Charles that he refused the offer. He had, however, a powerful reason for refusal. He knew too well why the pope wanted him; it was not as a protector against the Greeks, but against the Lombards. Now for more than a century his people and the Lombards had been friends. Any assumption of Frank power in Italy, any single Frank soldier sent over the Alps would be a challenge, not so much to the dim, distant and comparatively powerless iconoclast at Constantinople, but to Charles' own good friend Liutprand at Pavia; Liutprand, who at the very time was sending Lombard troops to help Charles against the Saracens in Southern Gaul. If Charles needed any persuasion to take this view of the situation, it is highly probable that Boniface was the persuader; 'Your work,' he may well have said to Charles, 'and mine lie here, on the right bank of the Rhine not on the Tiber.' Deeply as the great English missionary was pledged to be the servant of the Roman See, he could not afford to let his hammer-friend entangle himself in Italian politics. The popes then must for the present look out for themselves, whether against emperor or Lombard king. And so matters stood, and so Liutprand, getting the better of his spiritual fears, was advancing again towards Rome, when in 741 Charles Martel, Gregory III., and the Emperor Leo all died.

In Gaul there was at once a danger lest Charles' death should be followed by a break-up of his dominions. He left three sons, Carloman, Pippin, Grifo, and a troublesome widow. Any family strife between these might easily lead to a restoration of the helpless but still living Merovingians. But the 'great men' among the Franks, call them nobles or call them merely army-leaders, would not admit Grifo, who was an unsatisfactory person, to any share of territory or power, and accordingly the 'Empire' of Charles was more or less equally divided between Pippin and Carloman. It is true that the newly incorporated bits, Aquitaine and Southern and Western Germany, began to move at once, and it cost some stubborn fighting to

repress them; but the two brothers acted in good accord and stifled the insurrections one after the other. The Bavarians gave most trouble, for the heathen Saxons joined their Duke, and even more heathen Wends and Slavs, far away on the Elbe; that best of popes, Zacharias, was for a moment on the Bavarian side, and sent to the Frankish camp on the river Lech in 743, a legate who in the name of St Peter forbade a battle. The Frank brothers received the legate courteously, let him see them beat the Bavarians, and then explained to him that either he or St Peter must have made a mistake. Boniface upheld the same view, which the pope ended by accepting. Zacharias in fact had his hands very full of Liutprand in Italy, as we shall presently see.

Carloman was the elder of the two Frank brothers, and, as he had ruled in Austrasia, he had more to do with Boniface than had Pippin. It was he who called in 742-3 the first two synods of the German Church, to confirm the power of Boniface and his new foundations. At the second of these two synods it was decided to regularise the position of Church and State by taking a hapless Merovingian, called Childeric III., out of a monastery and putting him up as nominal king again; for seven years there had been no king at all. Pippin cordially agreed, and held a council in Neustria the next year to confirm the same. The settlement of the Western Frankish Church was a more difficult task. Until the death of Charles Martel in 741, there had been no synod called for eighty years, but now such meetings began to be held frequently. The rude Frank bishops had to obey, and came to the synod with a very ill grace. Boniface fixed his see at Mainz; he claimed supremacy west of Rhine also, and was going to enforce obedience to the customs of the Church as understood by himself and the pope.

In the middle of these activities Carloman in 747 was suddenly attacked with the malady of the age, threw up his civil duties, and hurried to Italy to become a monk. After a few shifts of place he settled at Monte Cassino. He left a son Drogo to Pippin's care, but claimed for him

no share of territory or government. Pippin, the less impulsive and the more far-seeing of the brothers, accepted the charge of the whole of the Frankish Empire. He made one mistake, for he liberated the turbulent Grifo (who had been confined in a castle), and had to pay for his mercy in a long series of insurrections. It was the difficulties which Grifo caused him, now flying to heathen Saxony, now to Bavaria, now to Aquitaine, which prompted Pippin to ask himself in 749 the questions, 'What am I? am I king? if not, why not?' Probably Boniface had for some time been asking himself the same question concerning Pippin. At any rate, it was Boniface's friend the Bishop of Würzburg and Pippin's friend the Abbot of Saint-Denis who were now sent to Rome to consult Zacharias on the matter. These emissaries put it to the pope almost as a doctrinal question 'Ought not he who rules to be acknowledged as ruler?' and Zacharias, without, we may well believe, any thought of ultimate advantage for the papacy in his head, replied 'He ought.'

But it was a mighty step for the apostolic authority of St Peter. If Gaul had always been the eldest child of the Roman Empire, this would make the King of the Franks the eldest son of the Roman Church. Pippin accepted the ruling, and, together with his Queen Bertrada, was solemnly anointed if not also crowned by Boniface at Soissons in 751. Crowning by a bishop was a thing long known in the East;[1] some barbarian kings, *e.g.*, the Visigoths, knew it too, although the Merovings had never known it. But the anointing after the old Jewish fashion was quite new to Christendom, and in such a superstitious age was of enormous importance. The race of St Arnulf was hallowed by it. Pippin himself had scruples; he had sworn fealty to the Meroving Childeric, who of course had now to be deposed and go to a monkery. So in the next year he asked the new pope, Stephen II., to 'absolve him from his oath'—another new idea, another feather in the

[1] Leo I. is the first certain instance, in 457. It is doubtful whether an actual crown was used for a Frankish king before the coronation of Charles the Great at Rome in 800.

papal cap. There remained only the question of Carloman and his son Drogo. Whether the pope would or would not support Pippin against any eventual claim of his brother and his nephew, would depend very much upon what Pippin would do for the pope.

We are now approaching the most critical point in the Dark Ages. We must therefore try and clear our minds of theories and modern ideas, and must look the facts, so far as we know them, fully in the face. Unfortunately we know the facts very imperfectly.

By the date 750, everyone must admit that Justinian's reconquest of Italy has been proved to be a failure. East and West have pulled apart beyond any possibility of reunion. For a century and a half the claims of the emperors to any control of the popes have been fitful, tyrannical and ineffectual. Equally so have been their claims to rule Italy from Ravenna. The exarchate is on its very last legs; hardly do we know the name of the last exarch.[1] A feeble hold on the extreme south, on Naples and on Sicily the emperor may keep; these districts had always been more Greek than Italian; but the life of Italy is not in her heel, her toe or her instep.

Yet these claims, civil and ecclesiastical, have been enough to spoil the chances of the Lombards, who might otherwise have built up a national Italy. Either incurable stupidity or else extreme malignity of Fortune dogs the steps of these people; first it is their Arianism, then their undoubted cruelty, always their want of union, that spoils their game. The first of these makeweights was in 750 long forgotten, and probably the second also; but even the great Liutprand has been unable to get over the third. Though he can reduce to submission a Duke of Spoleto or of Benevento, he can never move his people to one impulse. Moreover a Lombard king is always horribly afraid of the very thing he wants to do—to take Rome; 'I dare not' always waits upon 'I would.' It is an aggravated case of *Romani nominis umbra*, and this fear is exploited with full

[1] Oddly enough the name 'Romagna' stuck to the last province of Northern Italy that had been actively governed from Constantinople.

consciousness by the great popes of the eighth century, especially by the two Gregories, by Zacharias, and his immediate successors. Not only can they wield all the terrors of the next world, but they can also invoke against Pavia at least the name of Constantinople, if not the troops of Ravenna and Naples; and they can also nearly always play off the Southern Lombard dukes against the Northern Lombard king. These popes will also be supported by the Roman 'People.' Rome is again full of self-consciousness; it has a militia, it has nobles of a sort, it has a very powerful and clerically-minded rabble, it elects its own bishop, occasionally even deposes and maltreats him. Rome appears at times like a naughty child, in whose hands are several very dangerous fireworks, ready to go off and kill all the beholders if anyone tries to take them away.

Roughly speaking that has been the situation for a century past; and it has gone on worsening, until the emperor has almost ceased to interest himself in Italy at all, the Arabs affording, indeed, quite enough food for his reflections. If the last ties should be cut—and in 750 they are almost gone—Rome and Pavia will be left face to face. Liutprand had supported Gregory II. against Leo the Image-breaker, but in Gregory III.'s time he had again been hostile, and his rebel dukes had been received and comforted in Rome. Then came Zacharias, who had completely got round the pious king. Zacharias had given up the cause of the Duke of Benevento and allowed Liutprand to master his duchy. He had gone in person to the royal camp at Interamna (now Terni), brought the king into a condition of perfect tameness, entertained him at dinner, and received a few cities as donations from him. Liutprand is supposed to have said that no dinner had ever cost him so much. When he continued to fight the exarch, Zacharias again visited him (at Pavia in 743) and induced him to restore nearly all the Ravennese territory he had taken. Liutprand died in 744, and his successor Rachis was equally tameable, and, indeed, soon joined Carloman in his monastery.

But the next Lombard king, Astulph, was a blundering hothead, sick of diplomatic popes, and burning for a little honest plunder. In 750 he fell upon the exarchate, took Ravenna with all the Pentapolis, and advanced along the Flaminian way towards Rome, demanding, like any Arab, submission, tribute, poll-tax. Stephen II. (some call him Stephen III. for he succeeded a Stephen who only reigned three days) had just become Pope; he cried for help to the Emperor Constantine V., the fiercest of the iconoclasts. Constantine, whose hands were full of a caliph, hardly cared to send answer, much less help, to the image-worshippers; he had just obtained, at the Council of Constantinople (753), the sanction of over three hundred bishops of the East to the policy of the destruction of images. On the receipt of the news of this council the 'nobles and people of Rome' took the momentous step of appealing to Pippin, King of the Franks.

The mystery of the whole thing is why Astulph did not persevere and seize Rome long before the appeal could be made; why he ever allowed Stephen's messengers to pass through his territory. In the present state of historical knowledge no satisfactory answer can be given to these questions. To Pippin Stephen was quite able to say:—'St Peter crowned you, now show your gratitude; if you do so, you need be under no anxiety about any future claims of your brother and your nephew.' What he openly said was 'Please invite me to your court.' Pippin was delighted, and sent a worthy, but not an armed escort for the pope. Stephen started in October 753, and, with great daring, visited Astulph in Pavia, extracted from him a promise not to hinder his journey, and, in January 754, was met by Pippin's elder son Charles (afterwards Charlemagne) and led by him into Pippin's presence at Ponthion-sur-Marne. With ashes on his head and every outward sign of humility, the pope knelt to the king; but he rose from his knees victor in one of the greatest diplomatic games ever played in the world. A bargain was at once struck; the King of the Franks will defend St Peter with the sword against all and sundry, but especially

against the unspeakable Lombards. St Peter, for his part, will nominate the king 'patrician' of Rome, and will confirm the sovereignty over the Franks to him and his house for ever.

Subsequent history teaches us that by this bargain the Pope alone was the gainer, that the Franks, and all other German races who followed in their footsteps, lost very heavily by it, though perhaps not more heavily than the Italian people. Pippin was no student of the philosophy of history, but even he ought to have seen the dangers of an intervention which his wise father had refused. He had quite enough to do in Gaul and Germany, for he had Moors in the south-west and Saxons in the north-east to fight. It is quite clear that many of his counsellors both lay and clerical did see the danger; Eginhard, the biographer of Charlemagne, says they even spoke of deserting Pippin. To make this more plain Carloman, who had already been for seven years a monk, suddenly reappeared at his brother's court and protested energetically against the whole business; he had the encouragement of the aged Boniface who was all against it,[1] and the encouragement of his own abbot of Monte Cassino. It must have been quite a dramatic scene; but the pope, the king, and the papal party at court were equal to the situation, and to Carloman there was the obvious answer 'O naughty monk, to break your *regula!* Get you to a safer monkery'; so poor Carloman was shut up at Vienne where he quickly died (755). Boniface, for his part, found but one thing left to do in a world which seemed to be forgetting its duties; there were a few of his old Frisian friends, either left or relapsed heathens; so he sought out the most dangerous place he could find among them and was martyred, with seven companions, near Utrecht in the year 756.

Meanwhile the bargain had been ratified in the most solemn fashion. The pope reanointed not only Pippin but his two sons as kings of the Franks, and pronounced

[1] Boniface was an old friend of the Lombards since the days of Liutprand; there is a tradition at Mainz that he spoke to Pope Stephen very bluntly on the subject of the new policy.

anathema on anyone who should ever help any other family to the Frankish throne. He named them all three 'patricians of Rome' (a sheer usurpation of the Imperial power), and annexed to that office the duty of defending the Holy City and the tombs of the two apostles at all times and against all comers. And Pippin in return spoke most severely to Astulph. That foolish person mocked at the scolding, and yet omitted to seize defenceless Rome, and so Pippin had to give up his duties toward his Moorish and Saxon neighbours and hasten to do the pope's bidding in Italy.

In effect, what Pippin said to Astulph was this:—'You must give up certain specified places in the Exarchate and the Pentapolis, and all places you have occupied in the Duchy of Rome. I will pay you a large sum if you do this.' To whom were these places to be given up? Formally, perhaps, by a document drawn up before Pippin left Gaul, to the Empire; in reality to the pope. In what capacity? as to a landowner, or a patron? To this question neither Pippin nor his son Charlemagne ever seems to have found the right answer. The outward and visible sign of the surrender was to be the delivery of the keys of all the cities in question, these keys to be placed upon St Peter's tomb. The popes could hardly be blamed if they construed this to be a mark of full sovereignty (in Roman Law *dominium*). The Frank kings seem to have regarded it rather as mark of *possessio*, in the shape of rents and profits.

Astulph, for the moment, was going to fight rather than yield either dominion or possession. In the autumn of 754 the Franks were over the Alps, *via* Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, and seized Susa. The Lombards fought bravely, were beaten and fled to Pavia. There their king promised complete surrender and tribute, and Pippin, who considered that he had now satisfied St Peter, left Italy without advancing to Rome. But when the Franks had got back to Gaul, and the pope demanded his keys, Astulph refused to give them, hurried to Rome in 755, wasted all the *Campagna*, sacked such of the catacombs as

lay outside its walls (in order to provide himself with relics of martyrs), and burned all the houses round St Peter's. It looks as if the walls of Aurelian must really have been both defensible and well defended, for the Lombards lay for fifty-five days outside them before Stephen thought it necessary to send for Frankish aid. When he did send, St Peter himself wrote and signed the letter, and was almost as angry with Pippin for having treated with Astulph as with Astulph for having deceived Pippin. The Franks obediently took the field again in 756, and the story of two years before was repeated. A second 'donation,' actually specifying Ravenna and twenty-one other towns in the Exarchate and Pentapolis, was made to St Peter. A second treaty with Astulph with even more promises, including the surrender of one-third of the Lombard 'treasure,' was concluded. At its negotiation we find a much-belated ambassador of the emperor, who argued with some reason that the exarchate was neither Astulph's to withhold, Pippin's to give, nor Stephen's to receive. His arguments were politely ignored, and the Abbot of Saint-Denis actually went to Ravenna and brought its keys to the pope.

In truth we do not know exactly what was comprised in this or in several subsequent donations, made by successive Teutonic sovereigns to the Roman See; the original documents of the eighth century have disappeared. The popes at various times interpreted them variously; sometimes they claimed distant places like Venetia, Corsica, even Naples. We must always remember that some of the richest estates of the See had lain in Sicily, and that these had now been confiscated by Leo the Iconoclast; also that many estates on the mainland, which had once been papal, had probably been seized by the Lombards, either in their first onrush or later; we have seen Liutprand paying for his dinner by giving up some of these to Pope Zacharias. But in no cases had the older papal property been anything but an estate (*possessio*); the sovereignty (*dominium*) had always been deemed to reside in the emperor. And the result

of the donations was, in the end, to give to the popes both *dominium* and *possessio* of much of Central Italy, to found for them a temporal principality, which lasted till 1870. That such temporal power was of any conceivable use to the Church or the world is to me unthinkable, while to Italy it spelt mere ruin and incessant foreign invasion.

The Gallican Church certainly benefited, not by the bargain but by the close connection with Rome which resulted therefrom. Pippin continued the work of Boniface by setting his own ecclesiastical house in order, and papal legates came regularly to Gallican Church councils, to Verneuil (755), to Compiègne (757). Papal decretals were laid before these synods and declared to be binding on all clergy. Archbishoprics were created, and their spheres delimited. The turbulent bishops of Charles Martel's days, who had done nought bishoplike, were now a thing of the past, although the Church failed to recover all the lands which that excellent ruler had taken from it for the defence of the realm. When Waifer, Duke of Aquitaine, proceeded to tax and administer the estates of the Southern bishops, Pippin, the obedient son of the Church, had to go South and beat him to his knees, and to spend five years in the task (761-6). By the latter year the Frankish power had reached the Garonne, and Waifer only held out on the shore of the Atlantic. So by serving the Church the Frank king benefited the State. The Moors too were steadily beaten back; Nismes had fallen even before Pippin's first Italian job, and it was in the siege that the great Roman amphitheatre of the city was reduced to a ruin. In 759 came the crowning triumph of the recapture of Narbonne. In all the countries which had once obeyed the Visigoths, Pippin prudently left Romano-Gothic law in force; the south therefore remained distinct in custom even under Frank suzerainty. One might say that the Germans are right to-day when they call France 'Frankreich'; for it is the old kingdom of the Franks with Southern Gaul tacked on to it. Pippin's last work was to hold in 767 a synod,

which fully endorsed the papal doctrine that it is our duty to adore the holy images. In Italy there had been no further trouble. Astulph was killed in the hunting field in 756, and a Lombard noble, called Desiderius, was by Pippin's favour elected king at Pavia. Stephen also patronised him; and Desiderius solemnly swore to surrender all the cities of the 'donations' to St Peter, and probably did surrender the keys of most of them. The astute pope died in 757, and was succeeded by his own brother Paul I., who reigned for ten years. Before Paul's death the attitude of Desiderius had grown less satisfactory.

ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER VII

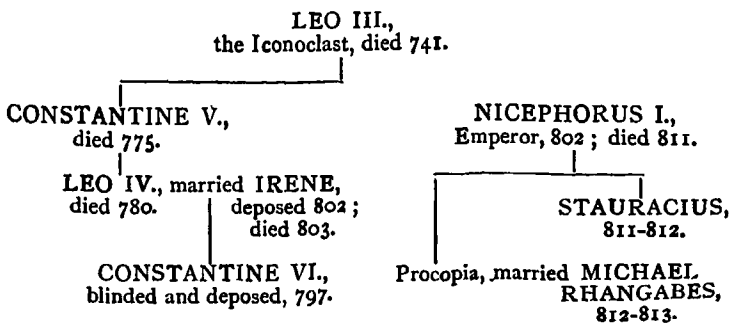
The TIME covered is, roughly, the reign of Charlemagne, 768-814.

The chief EVENTS described are — (1) The split of Islam into an Eastern and Western Caliphate, called respectively the 'Abbassid' and the 'Ommiad,' with the two centres of Bagdad and Cordova. (2) The steady orientalising of the government of the Empire at Constantinople; the struggle between the image-breaking and image-worshipping parties there; and the accident of there being no emperor, but only a reigning empress, in the year 800. (3) The career of Charlemagne as warrior, lawgiver and civiliser, culminating in his coronation as Emperor at Rome in the year 800; this is the foundation of the 'Holy Roman Empire,' but the relations of the 'Eastern' Empire to this new 'Western' one are never defined. (4) The growing pretensions of the Papacy, which in after years will claim to dispose of this new Imperial Crown of the West.

The chief ACTORS are:—

(1) CHARLEMAGNE,
Joint-King of the Franks, from 768, with his brother, Karloman, till Karloman's death in 771;
Sole King after that; Emperor, 800-814; died 814.

(2) The emperors, who reigned at Constantinople. (See also Table in Chapter VI.).



CHAPTER VII

CHARLES THE GREAT

> His honour and the greatness of his name
> Shall be, and make new nations.

THE period which we have now to consider will have for its central point the growth and consolidation of the Frankish power in the hands of the hero who has given his name to the Carolingian Age and to many things besides. Larger and larger will Charlemagne loom on the canvas, and, happily, he is one of those figures to whom time and research have rather added glories than not. But we must also keep our eyes occasionally directed to the Near East, lest we should wholly neglect the effect of the fortunes of the caliphate and the 'Roman' Empire at Constantinople on the course of affairs in the West.

The middle of the eighth century was as great an epoch in the history of Islam as of Christendom. Civil strife in the Moslem world led to the setting up of rival caliphates, as far asunder ecclesiastically, and with centres twice as far asunder geographically, as Rome was from Constantinople. The Ommiad caliphs at Damascus had always been suspected persons to the more strict professors of Islam at Mecca and wherever the old party of Ali was strong; the *Imaums* or 'holy men' everywhere inclined to the latter party. Moaviah, the first Ommiad caliph had, however, been a man of real talent, and had done his best to give some sort of unity to his empire, to which each new province had been added on different terms and after a different set of capitulations. His object was to disturb

the conquered peoples as little as possible in all the relations of law, trade and private life, although he appointed *kadis* (judges) in each province, who administered a certain sort of primitive equity. At Damascus, except for the use of the now classical Arabic language, the government was probably not unlike that of Constantinople. Caliph Abdul-Melik did indeed coin new gold (which seems to have offended Justinian II.) and built many mosques; it was he who built the so-called Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, one of the loveliest erections on earth. A person looking at that mosque and forgetting its surroundings might think he was in Ravenna; it is not Eastern or Arab at all, but pure Byzantine-Greek, like St Sophia at Constantinople. So it is with Welid I.'s great Mosque at Damascus; Greek architects no doubt built both. Every conquering government puts on something of the complexion of those it conquers or displaces, and the thin stream of Arab blood probably changed far less than we suppose the habits and ideas of Syrian, Egyptian or Spaniard. Welid's schools at Damascus, while teaching Moslem theology, no doubt absorbed many ideas from the Christian schools on whose endowments they were raised. In trade the Arabs trod in the old routes of their Greek predecessors, and added their own. There were, it is true, reactionary caliphs even among the Ommiads, and the revolution that was to overthrow their line arose wholly from a reaction. But reaction did not endure, and the new Abbassid caliphate was soon to be as worldly and as political as the Ommiad.

I have told you that the descendants of Abbas had always looked askance at the government of Damascus, and, when the vigorous Mervan II. seized the throne in 744, their discontent increased. The first insurrection broke out far eastward at Merv, and a caliph of Abbassid descent was proclaimed in Persia. The movement spread rapidly westwards. Mervan fought bravely and was killed in Egypt in 749. A massacre of all the Ommiads but one followed, and that one, Abderrahman, after

marvellous adventures, turned up in Spain in 755, and finally succeeded in establishing himself at Cordova.[1]

Meanwhile the Abbassids moved, in 762, the seat of government from Damascus to the new foundation of Bagdad on the Tigris, not far from the old Sassanid capital of Ctesiphon. Bagdad became a great centre of trade and of Arab culture, which in fact reproduced many of the conditions of the old Persian kingdom.[2]

If the caliphate, owing to its geographical position and political circumstances, thus put on the ordinary trappings of the older monarchies of the Near East, the rulers of Constantinople pursued a not wholly dissimilar course. If at the death of Constantine IV. (685) the Empire is Græco-Asiatic, a century later it is definitely 'Eastern.' The recent losses of territory, though they meant a heavy loss of revenue, led to a real strengthening of what remained. Though Bulgars and Slavs still roamed over the European provinces, and Arabs from Syria thundered at the back door, they made no substantial conquests for a long time to come. Leo III. had gained immortal honour by his defensive; his son

[1] There his posterity reigned, at first only as emirs or 'sultans' until, in 929, Abderrahman III. took the title-of caliph. His direct line came to an end in 1031, and Moslem Spain was then divided among several dynasties for half a century. In 1086 an African race, the Almoravids, succeeded in uniting again nearly all of the Peninsula which the Christians had not reconquered; it was a later dynasty, the Nasrids, who were finally driven from Granada by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1492.

[2] Thirty-six successive Abbassid caliphs reigned there for five hundred years, until in 1258 the Mongols drove them out; they fled to Egypt and lingered on at Cairo, with no power but the title of caliph, until 1517, when the Ottoman Turk Selim I. conquered Egypt and called himself caliph. Africa was early independent of either caliphate; the dynasty of the 'Fatimites' got hold of Kairouan in 903, transferred itself to Cairo in 972 and came to an end there in 1171. Islam, in fact, displayed a perpetual tendency to break up into local groups and sects based more upon dynastic than religious differences. False prophets ('Mahdis') abounded. None of the dynasties mentioned in this and the preceding note are in any sense 'Children of the Roman Empire,' but we shall occasionally rub against them in treating of the fortunes of the children.

Constantine V. (741-75) was a cruel tyrant to image-worshippers, but a most efficient guardian of his frontiers. After putting down an insurrection at home, he had, as we saw above, held a solemn council in 753, and forced his own iconoclastic views on the Eastern Church. He then took the offensive, both to the North and the East, beat Bulgars and Slavs on the Danube, and refortified his frontier against them; beat the Abbassids in Armenia and took from them Erzeroum and Theodosiopolis, while his fleet defended Sicily from Moslem attacks which had already begun there. He died in 775 a thoroughly victorious man. Leo IV. his son died in 780, leaving an ambitious widow Irene as regent for her young son Constantine VI. Irene was prepared for anything and everything if she could keep power for herself; and the worshippers of images were evidently the popular party. Thus, when the great Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid pressed upon her Eastern frontiers, she made a shameful peace with him and paid tribute, in order to have her hands free at home. For the same reason she sent an embassy to the new King of the Franks, whom we shall soon know as Charlemagne, offering him her alliance and asking for his daughter for her son. Before such a proposal could be seriously entertained, she had to come again into line with the Western Church over the question of images; so she got a carefully packed synod at Nicæa in 787 to reverse the decrees of 753 and restore idolatry. Papal legates were even invited to this synod, so one cannot say that the tie between the churches was wholly broken. But, meanwhile, her son was growing to manhood and growling against his mother and her eunuchs, who kept him wholly in the shade and banished all his favourites. In 790 he tried a *coup d'état* against her party with some temporary success, but allowed her to retain a co-regency with himself. He had wars, now unsuccessful, now successful, both with Arabs and Bulgars; he had insurrections, which both he and his mother repressed with great cruelty. Clerical influences were all for the mother, military influences for the son. After much

strife the clergy egged on Irene to depose Constantine, and in 797 he was seized, fearfully handled and blinded by his mother's order. He lived in prison, perhaps till 822, and Irene reigned alone till 802. Thus in the fateful year 800 *there was no Roman Emperor*, and we shall soon see the result of this on Western opinion and Western events, to which we must now turn.

Now if one could think of the Franks more wholly as the chosen champions of Christendom, one might feel rather happier about the origin of their power. It was in that light that later legend represented their great hero Charlemagne. No doubt in Gaul, the necessity of fighting Moors led to the extension of Frank power, and the Gothicised provinces of Gaul submitted readily to the Franks from fear of the Moors. The easy surrender by the Greeks of all claims on North Italy may be attributed to a similar cause, the perennial danger of the Eastern capital from Islam. But the popes, even the best of them, seem to have been singularly blind to the fact that Italy was almost equally in danger, and their inveterate hostility to the Lombards undoubtedly weakened Italy in the face of Moslem attacks. Nor does any one, except Charlemagne, and, for a few years his son Louis I., seem to have interested himself in the fortunes of once-Christian Spain. And I fear we shall find reason to complain that Charlemagne himself was extremely 'political' in his attitude towards Islam as a whole.

It rarely happened, in the Dark Ages, that three successive generations of rulers of any state could be called great men; but it was undoubtedly true of Charles Martel, Pippin, and Charles (Charlemagne), son of Pippin. They must have been very able men indeed, to conciliate and keep in their fidelity such a wild people as the Franks of the seventh and eighth centuries, to become both the inheritors of the old Roman *régime* and the leaders of the new feudal aristocracy. It also rarely happened in those days that an illuminating and sober biography of one such man was written by one of his friends and contemporaries; but this was true of Eginhard's *Life of*

Charlemagne. In estimating the value of this book, something must perhaps be allowed for the fact that Eginhard had been educated with the king's own children and owed everything to him, that he had become his secretary and chaplain, and was constantly at his side during his old age.

Upon King Pippin's death in 768 the usual division of territory was made between his sons Charles and Carloman, both of whom as boys had been hallowed by Pope Stephen; to Charles went Austrasia and most of Neustria; to Carloman went Burgundy, Alamannia and Provence which commanded the passes into Italy. Both were hailed as kings in 768; could they work together? Would any unity of policy be possible? Neither Germany, nor Rome (of which, remember, they were 'patricians'), nor Aquitaine was quiet, and the first task of Charles was to subdue a rising in Aquitaine. Before this was accomplished events in Rome were leading to jealousy between the royal brothers. One supposes that the Roman 'nobles' were beginning to look upon the chair of St Peter as an extremely desirable seat, now that to its spiritual authority had been added so much temporal power. Anyhow, on the death of Paul I. in 767, there was a fierce scramble for that chair, and we become aware what a wild barbarous place 'Rome, which was formerly the capital of the world,' had become. There was apparently a Greek party, a Lombard party, and a Frank party among the rude captains of the city militia. One lot of these ruffians chose a layman called Constantine for pope, rushed him hastily through the minor orders of the Church, and got him successfully consecrated. Another lot set up one Philip, apparently with Lombard favour, while a third party chose an old friend of the late pope and called him Stephen III. Stephen triumphed, and appealed to Charles and Carloman for support against the Lombards. Charles, the elder brother, sent twelve grave Frank ecclesiastics; the Lombard king Desiderius, who was nearer the spot, came with a Lombard army. Carloman also seems to have had emissaries in Rome, who were perhaps already jealous of the friends of Charles;

these made an alliance with the Lombard party in order to dominate Stephen. Carloman and Desiderius arranged that there should be a triple marriage between the Lombard and Frank royal houses; Charles for a moment consented, and actually received a Lombard princess to wife; Carloman married another. But Charles soon saw that he had made a mistake, sent back the lady, and threw his weight into the scale of Stephen. He was preparing to invade Italy and perhaps to fight his own brother for it when, most luckily, Carloman died (771). Carloman's widow went to live at Pavia, and looked upon King Desiderius as her protector. This boded ill for the remains of the Lombard power, although Stephen was released, from Lombard and Frank alike, by death in 772.

But, for the time, Charles (not yet 'le Magne' or 'the Great') was able to begin with a clear conscience his thirty-year-long contest with his heathen neighbours the Saxons. We must clear our minds of the notion of 'Saxony' as it appears on a modern map. The Saxony of those days had as its main artery the Weser, not the Elbe; the Elbe was almost its eastern frontier; westwards the Saxon race filled all Westphalia up to the North Sea, and almost reached the lower Rhine, where it merged into the kindred Frisian. Bede, writing of these Saxons half a century before Charles took them in hand, recognises their kinship to our own people, and calls them 'Old Saxons': he says they have no king but many 'satraps'—for Bede will be classical where he can; a later English chronicler would honestly have written, in more barbarous but more intelligible Latin, *aldermannos*. Modern Saxony was then occupied by Wends, Obotrites, Slavs, 'in sheepskins and primæval filth.' North both of Saxons and Wends, between the Eider and the Lower Elbe, lay Danes, of whom one day we shall hear too much. These Saxons were the most conservative heathens you can imagine. They had sanctuaries and groves, and their idol was a horse's head, to which they sacrificed live men. As early as 755 Pippin had had dealings of no peaceful nature with them, and he had once carried his arms to the

Weser. It would be infinitely wearisome to recapitulate the details of Charles' wars in the same region.

These wars usually began with a solemn assembly of bishops and *grandes* at Aachen, or at Worms, Ingelheim, or some other Rhenish city. This would be followed by an issue of the *ban* or *hereban* (army call) to the Frankish warriors of Austrasia or Neustria or both; then came a march to the Weser, or even to the Elbe, often with hard fighting through the thick forests, then an assembly of the leaders of the vanquished Saxons, who would promise submission, give hostages, and allow themselves to be baptised. Missionaries should be allowed to preach freely, and tribute should be paid. 'Groves' were hewn down and demons exorcised. Then Charles would go home to the Rhine, and perhaps be called away over the Alps or Pyrenees, and, directly he was gone, the Saxons would throw off their new faith and their new fealty at once. 'Death or baptism' was a convenient formula, but it was a difficult one to enforce in Westphalian forests. More than once, as years went on, Charles was able to hold a 'Diet' (day of assembly) in the heart of Saxony, and to compel the Saxon 'satraps' to attend it; but the very men who had attended it would often be 'out' again before his rearguard had recrossed the Rhine. Once at least (it was just after Charles' one military failure in Spain) the Saxons retaliated, and wasted the whole Rhine valley up to Coblenz. It was all very well to map out districts, called *gaue*, to create dioceses, to appoint counts to rule the *gaue*, and bishops to rule the dioceses, to decree the penalty of death against those who ate flesh in Lent;[1] but Wittikind, who gradually comes to the front as the Saxon hero, can generally fly to the heathen Danes who do not keep Lent at all. Charles' 'Capitularies,' *i.e.*, his administrative regulations (often miscalled laws), published nearly every year, are full of stern enactments against those who perform human sacrifices to devils. Whereas in his other dominions he recognises composition and payment of *wergild* as atonement for killing a man

[1] This is actually found in the Capitulary of the year 781.

(Capitulary of 802), for the Saxons rape, murder, sacrilege, witchcraft and treason are to be visited with the penalty of death. Even he who refuses to have his baby baptised within its first year is to be heavily fined. Good authority states that the pious King of the Franks once beheaded at Verden 4500 Saxons in a single day, in revenge for one of their outbreaks; it is difficult to believe it, for it is at the rate of three a minute even in a day of twenty-four hours. And in other circumstances Charles was not cruel. We must also remember that it was the battle of civilisation that he was fighting against much more cruel men. When Wittikind was at last caught and baptised. at Attigny, Charles was his sponsor, and the worst of the Saxon trouble was over;[1] but local resistance never died out, and was nourished by the wilder non-German tribes to the east of the river Elbe.

Meanwhile Charles was also busy in Italy. The pontificate of Stephen III. was short; he died in 772 and a Roman noble, Hadrian I., one of the greatest popes in history, was elected. He was a red hot anti-Lombard, trained at the feet of Stephen II., but a more honest and more honourable man than he. Desiderius, if he had not behaved well to Paul, had behaved worse to Stephen III., and was now again clawing at that district of Ravenna and Pentapolis which we ought no longer to call the exarchate; he covered his aggressions by declaring that he was acting in the interest of the little sons of the deceased Carloman. Hadrian at once turned to Charles; it is significant that his messengers had to go by sea:—'Come, you Franks,' wrote the pope, 'and stop this Lombard.' The story of Pippin and Astulph was repeated, with some variations, in 773.

Charles started from Geneva and came in two divisions, by the Great Saint-Bernard and by the Mont-Cenis; Desiderius made brave defence of Pavia and Verona;

[1] Charles can claim to have founded at least eight new bishoprics in North Germany, on the very ground where he tamed the Saxons and even while he was taming them, to wit Hildesheim, Halberstadt, Minden, Münster, Osnabruck, Paderborn, Bremen and Verden.

Charles at the latter town got hold of his little nephews, left Pavia blockaded, and passed on to keep the Easter of 774 in the 'Holy City.' No doubt he duly venerated what he was told to venerate, and knelt where other pilgrims had knelt. But on this and subsequent visits he brought to Rome a curiosity more intelligent than had yet been brought by any pilgrim. Charles was thoroughly imbued, and every year he lived he became more imbued with the desire, which to a lesser extent had been that of Theodoric the Goth, of rescuing from oblivion such fragments of antiquity as remained. Legends were growing up every day concerning the statues, temples, churches, palaces, and sites of Rome. The result of Charles' visits was the compilation, by an anonymous monk of the abbey of Einsiedln in Germany, of the first guide book to the city, subsequently expanded into the *Graphia Aureæ Romæ* and the *Mirabilia Urbis Romæ*, both of which may probably be assigned to the twelfth century. These books take the city street by street, and tell the mediæval pilgrim where he is to look for what. Of course they are largely concerned with ridiculous and profane relics,[1] but they also record ancient inscriptions. It was the Northern nations who taught the ignorant mediæval Romans to know their own city, just as to-day it is the

[1] The following list of relics is still inscribed in the cloisters of the Lateran :—the wooden altar on which the early Roman bishops celebrated the mass ; the actual table used at the Last Supper ; two phials of blood and water from Christ's side ; a part of His cradle ; His seamless coat ; His purple robe ; the napkin that was about His head ; the towel with which He wiped His disciples' feet ; part of the five barley loaves ; part of the ashes and blood of John Baptist ; his raiment of camel's hair ; part of the chain of St John Evangelist ; the shears with which his hair was cut off ; the Ark of the Covenant, with the two tables of the Law ; the golden censer of incense ; an urn of gold full of manna ; some of the shew-bread. Mediæval visitors also mention the golden mice and golden emerods ; the heads of SS. Peter, Paul, Zacharias, Agnes, Euphemia ; part of the actual bread that Christ consecrated at the Last Supper ; a picture of Him painted by St Luke, if not by God Himself ; two brazen pillars from Solomon's temple which sweat annually (9th day of month of Abib). See *Mirabilia Urbis Romæ*, edited by F. M. Nichols, 1889.

Northern nations who would save the monuments of that city from the greed and municipal vanity of their equally ignorant and far less reverent descendants.

While his grim Franks sat outside Pavia, Charles at Rome contracted a close alliance with the Pope. That he confirmed in some shape some 'donation' of Italian territory of his father Pippin is certain; but both the terms and the limits of it are unknown, and there is no evidence for them, except in the Life of Hadrian in the *Liber Pontificalis*, and in the interpretation put upon them by later popes. In the 'Life' there are extravagant statements about the gift of Venetia, Corsica, Spoleto, Benevento, besides the Duchy of Rome, the whole exarchate and Pentapolis. Much of this territory neither Charles nor any other Frank ever touched, much less conquered. If the donation of 774 had reached anything like these limits, there would have been no need of subsequent donations or promises of donation, such as we find Charles to have made in 778 and 787. In the course of his correspondence with Charles, Hadrian in 778 made the first reference to a document which afterwards became famous, no less than a reputed donation of the whole sovereignty of Italy by Constantine the Great to St Sylvester.[1] The great French historian, M. Duchesne, is inclined to date this document some twenty-five years earlier, *i.e.*, in the pontificate of Stephen II.; Professor Bury prefers to date it in Paul I.'s reign.[2] It seems to have produced very little effect upon

[1] It may be read in Latin in the appendix to Mr Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, or, in Mr Henderson's translation, in his *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, p. 319 *sqq.*

[2] Little use was made of this donation by the popes till the middle of the eleventh century, when it became one of the main weapons in their armoury; but it was embodied whole in the False Decretals (which became a much more potent weapon) in the middle of the ninth century. Hincmar knew of it, and so did Gerbert; and both evidently disbelieved in its authenticity. An ingenious attempt to explain away the significance and the shameless nature of this forgery is made by Mr A. J. Carlyle, *Hist. of Mediæv. Political Theory*, vol. i., p. 287 *sqq.*, but fails to carry conviction. It was finally exploded and shown to be a forgery by Laurentius Valla, one of the pioneers of the Italian Revival of Learning in the fifteenth century.

Charles' active liberality, for in 781 we find the Pope quite pleased with getting hold of the Sabine district, east of Rome up to the Apennines, and a piece of the Tuscan Maremma including Populonia; in 787 Charles expressly promised Hadrian 'Lombard Tuscany,' *i.e.*, a district including Viterbo, Orvieto, etc., up to the Lago di Bolsena, and on the south Arpino and a strip of the Duchy of Benevento, including Capua and Teano, etc.; these places the pope probably got. It would be a mistake to say that Hadrian entirely ceased asking for more; but in his later years at any rate, he seems to have realised that it was of no use to ask for too much.

The truth is that, as Charles came to realise his power and to receive the submission of Italian provinces (to get which St Peter had certainly helped him) he found it more convenient to keep them, *dominium* and *possessio* alike, for himself. Even of Ravenna, which had been undoubtedly included in the donation of Pippin, and whose keys Stephen had held in his hands, Hadrian never seems to have got hold; he tried to do so, but had a long contest first with its archbishop and then with Charles himself; and, when Hadrian openly said 'at least then give me Spoleto,' Charles replied with a firm negative, and kept Frankish garrisons in most of the important places of Northern and Central Italy.

On his way back from this first visit to Rome, Charles received the surrender of Pavia, extinguished Desiderius in a monastery, and was crowned himself as King of the Lombards. One of the sons of Desiderius, called Adelchis, escaped to Constantinople and continued to give trouble for some years. Tributary Lombard dukes were allowed to retain part of the duchies of Benevento and Spoleto, and probably the wilder spirits among the Northern Lombards took refuge at the court of the former of these dukes; the tamer ones proved excellent warriors in Charles' great mixed hosts.

In 778 (we must look for him in Saxony in the intervening years) Charles thought of turning his arms against the Moslem in Spain. There was a civil war going on

there between the *Valis*, and a Spanish partisan of the Abbassid Caliph of Bagdad came to Charles at Paderborn, in Saxon Westphalia, to get help from him against the Ommiads in Spain. The Abbassid caliph was already Charles' friend. Mark how political the relations between warring faiths have become. A Frankish king may have reason to suspect that a Greek emperor is likely to renew his designs on Italy (say on Ravenna, and let the Greek be Constantine V., not dead till 775). The Frank therefore receives in a friendly manner (say in 773) an embassy from the caliph, who is likely to be able to give trouble to this Greek emperor in Asia Minor. The caliph will be only too pleased if the Frank can hurt his Ommiad rival in far-away Spain. Thus the interests of united Christendom and united Islam gave way to the territorial interests of the respective champions of these faiths. And if the court of Aachen enters into amicable relations with Bagdad against Cordova and Constantinople, it will not be long before Constantinople seeks to comfort Cordova against Bagdad and Aachen. And so, in 778, Charles, in two divisions, crossed the Pyrenees and appeared in the valley of the Ebro before the old Roman walls of Cæsaraugusta, which has been so charmingly corrupted into Saragossa. Had he been victorious and driven the Moslem from Spain, what an epoch in Western history! But he had to be content with taking a few small places and a great many hostages from the local *Vali*. On his retreat he destroyed the fortifications of Pampeluna in the mountains, and suffered that reverse to his rearguard, which has become immortal from the legend of how

> Roland brave and Olivier
> And every paladin and peer
> In Roncesvalles died.

Whether they were Saracens or merely Gascon or Basque mountaineers who fell upon Count Roland, Warden of the Breton March, and his baggage train, is not quite certain. Eginhard, who knows nothing of the embroidery of the legend, says they were Gascons.

Charles returned from his Spanish failure to find not merely that Saxony was up, but that his whole Eastern frontier was kicking, that Southern Italy was aflame too; the Greeks of Naples were pressing on Roman territory from the South, the Duke of Benevento had joined them, and Adelchis, son of the last Lombard king, was expected to come and head the rising. 'With the exception of St Peter,' wrote Hadrian to Charles, 'my hope is only in you.' Such a king as Charles can have known little rest; he might well have called it, as a later German warrior, Frederick the Great, did, 'a dog of a life' (only Frederick put it even more strongly); the distances to cover were so enormous, the roads must have been so bad. A Capitulary issued at Pavia at the end of 780 speaks of great famine in Italy, and of men selling themselves and their families as slaves for hunger; such contracts are contrary to public policy, and Charles thereby annuls them. He was in Rome at Easter (781), and again six years later. Whenever he showed his soldiers in Italy, resistance melted away, and he never pressed hardly on a defeated Christian foe. The stiffest of all his Italian rebels were the dukes of Benevento, Grimoald and Arichis, for they could always turn for help to the Neapolitan and Sicilian Greeks; yet Arichis held the duchy for nineteen years before his death in 806, in spite of his frequent rebellions and apparently with Charles' consent.

The East German question was more serious. Of all the German duchies which dated back to late Merovingian times, Bavaria was the best rooted. It had a dynasty, the sons of one Agilulf, of some pretensions. It was a refuge for Saxons and for rebellious Lombards. True, it was Christian, and so Charles could always employ against its Duke Tassilo the weapon of papal excommunication, which of course was of no use against the Saxons. But Tassilo's wife was a daughter of the ex-King of the Lombards, and Tassilo rebelled, perhaps at her instigation, again and again. The last time was in 788, and then, in full assembly at Ingelheim, he was condemned to death as an incorrigible rogue, respited and made a monk.

Charles then proceeded to divide Bavaria into counties or *gaue* on the usual model. It was his campaigns in Bavaria which first brought Charles to consider the great river Danube. On the middle reaches of that river the Avars were again making themselves a nuisance from their fortified camp or 'Ring,' in the country which Eginhard still classically calls Pannonia. Tassilo had apparently hoped for help from these savages, but in vain. Hence in 791 Charles advanced down the Danube with the deliberate intention of planting Christian-German colonies or 'marks' in what is now Austria. He took with him contingents of all his subject German tribes, even of Frisians and Saxons barely redeemed from horse-head-worship and human sacrifice; especially he took Lombard cavalry. Like Napoleon after him he marched on both banks of the river, and had a fleet of boats to keep touch between his wings. It was on this campaign that he wrote to his third (or ? fourth) wife, Fastrada, 'dear wife pray for us and, if your health will allow you, fast for us.'

The Avars melted from before his face, and the Lombard horsemen chased them as they melted, and stormed their Ring. The plunder was enormous, it probably comprised the loot of the Balkan cities for the last two centuries. 'Before this,' says Eginhard, 'the Franks were a poor nation; now they became very rich.' Indeed the capture of this treasure is said to have seriously increased the scanty currency of Europe and, as a result, to have sent up prices everywhere! It was a simple age, in which the distinction between fixed capital and circulating capital was ill-understood. The territorial fruit of the conquest of the Avars was the subsequent plantation of the 'Mark' of Austria and the Duchy of Carinthia as outworks against Bulgars and Slavs. To the north of the Danube lay a people called the Czechs, of Slavonic blood and speech, entrenched in their diamond-shaped Bohemia, whose sides were all mountains; unfortunately, all German efforts to dislodge them, then and since, have failed. Northwards again, Obotrites, Letts, Wends, Serbs, and other nameless horrors reached up to the Baltic.

Luckily for Charles and civilisation, these were usually tearing each other in pieces (perhaps with neolithic weapons) too much to invade Christian Germany often. Fortresses were built, before the end of the reign, at several points on the rivers Elbe and Saale; north-east of these rivers chaos began and stretched to the frontiers of China. It was on the lower Elbe that Charles began first to hear in earnest of the Danes,[1] and he never ceased hearing of them till the end of his life; now they are plundering in Frisia (810); now they are receiving and comforting Saxon rebels; now 'king' Godfrey[2] boasts that he will come with all his army and visit Charles at Aachen; 'idle talk,' says Eginhard, 'but some really believed it.' Before Eginhard died in 840, he probably knew that there was more than idle talk in it. At the end of his life Charles, at any rate, was awake to the danger; he visited the coasts of the North Sea and the Channel, and built defensive works at their ports; he kept

[1] Gregory of Tours once mentions a Danish king plundering on the Channel coasts and being beaten off by Theudebert (iii., 3).

[2] There are no regular Kings of Denmark before Gorm the Old (899-936); but local tradition ascribes to this Godfrey about the year 809 the amazing piece of fortification known as the Danework, running from the Schlei to Hollingstedt north of the Eider; there it ends in impossible swamps and marshes, which in the ninth century were probably submerged. The Rhenish chronicler, Regino of Prüm (died 915), is so far as I know the earliest writer to support this view. It seems a little unlikely that a barbarian, who lived by raiding southwards, should have thought of protecting his country against invasion from the south by a vast earthen mound nearly twelve miles long. Gorm the Old and his Queen Thyra, a Christian, strengthened this wall with stones, and built or rebuilt the gate in it, ever since called the 'Thyrenberg'; Regino, however, knows of a single gate. Waldemar the Great continued it in the twelfth century, and the Regent Margaret Sprenghest added a piece of her own in the thirteenth. There are other adjoining bits of fortification called the 'Kohgraben,' perhaps best ascribed to Harold Bluetooth (936-986), and 'Oldenburg,' of which the origin is still a puzzle. But the interest of the whole thing is very great, and indeed unique, for it is, I believe, the only piece of fortification dating from the Dark Ages which has continued to be used in warfare till our own days. It was hotly defended in the war of 1864.

river boats and patrolled the coasts against Danish pirates, as his boats already patrolled the estuaries of the French and Italian Riviera against Moslem pirates. But there is no evidence that he ever possessed a fleet, or any sea-going ships in the proper sense of the words.

As we approach the great event of the year 800, the first real terminus to which the weary reader has to accompany me, we see how much the Frankish monarchy, like the caliphate, is founded on a union of Church and State. True, for the Franks, the union is temporary and non-fundamental, and is liable to be violently interrupted, whereas the caliph can really say, like Louis XIV., 'I am the State,' and, like Pius IX., 'I am the Church.' But under Charles, who was by no means a blind pietist, and who, if not the least unlearned king of the Dark Ages, did more to promote learning than all the others, Church and State really did run together as yoke-fellows, and drew with reasonably even pull at the plough of civilisation. The canons put forward by the early popes, of which there was a collection dating from the sixth century, were treated as laws by the Frankish State, and a 'Diet' at Aachen received them as such. This did not prevent Charles from treating Church lands as part of his dominions and making them bear their share of duties to the State. Several very strict injunctions to the clergy show that these were, as yet, by no means of apostolical virtue:—'You abbots are to live among your monks; you are to keep the very letter of your monastic *regula*, and the very letter of the Church law, as well as the precepts of the Gospel; you are to be very careful whom you ordain; you are not to keep dogs or hawks, or to go hunting; you are not to be drunkards, fornicators, or worse—we hear evil tales of you on such matters.' Charles undoubtedly made and deposed both bishops and abbots at his pleasure.

The great schools which Charles set up, primarily for the education of the clergy, were meant for the laity as well, and laymen occasionally taught and were taught in them. The remnants of Latin antiquity were studied

and zealously copied in these schools; if they were not wholly understood, they were at least saved for Europe. In the seventh and eighth centuries, until Charles took the schools in hand, Latin had only been studied because it was the language of the Church; quotations from the classics only survived in the dull grammars and *compendia* into which the scanty knowledge that survived was compressed. The manuscripts, however, were there, on the shelves of many monastic libraries; from Charles' time they began to be read and, still better, copied and multiplied. Translations into the vernacular tongues begin soon after his time. Eginhard can quote Cicero and imitate Suetonius; Bishop Theodulf of Orleans, in the intervals of administering Church and State, can write elegiacs of a kind. Charles can dictate Latin epigrams of his own composition. He liked to say his prayers in Latin. Though he could never pronounce it, he could understand Greek; this statement of Eginhard's does, it is true, rather take away one's breath; but Greek had been taught in the school of York at the end of the seventh century, and the curriculum of the school of Aachen was directly modelled on that of York. Fulda, Saint-Gall, Reichenau in Germany, old Corbey on the Somme, were the most flourishing schools after Aachen. Charles could never learn to write, though he worked very hard at it and even kept his copy-book under his pillow, and tried to form his letters in his wakeful night hours (he was a very light sleeper), but in vain. Moreover—if only this had survived!—he had the old songs of the Frankish language written out, and even began a Frankish grammar.

His zeal for Church services was great. A 'letter to his people' is extant, in which he says he has ordered a careful recension of the Liturgy and also of the manuscripts of the Bible, which had been corrupted by ignorant copyists. With the aid of Paul the Lombard Deacon, he prepared new lectionaries; Paul was set down to read the Catholic Fathers, and to make from their works a *florilegium* of pieces suitable to be read in Church. We do not hear of Charles as a great builder

of churches, but, as Aachen was his darling city, so the great church at Aachen is the best memorial of him. It was designed to be the St Sophia of the West; its style is Byzantine, but the hands were those of a Frank architect. It was at once a palace-chapel and a royal burying-place, the parent of many 'royal' cathedrals. Other favourite residences of Charles were Frankfort on the Main and Attigny, but above all Ingelheim on an island in the Rhine a little below Mainz.

In fact, we may say that this great man not only fostered but actually ordered a sort of first 'Renaissance' or new-birth of learning. He and his courtiers delighted to write Latin epigrams to each other, and adopted classical nicknames for each other. It was this Renaissance which attracted Paul the Deacon from the far-off monastery of Monte Cassino; he came first to Metz to write epitaphs for the royal tombs, and spent some four years altogether at various places in 'Frank-land.' It was this also which attracted a far greater scholar, the Englishman Alcuin, who had the traditions of the school of York. Through Alcuin's hands until his death in 804 passed most of Charles' diplomatic correspondence with popes, caliphs, and Greek emperors. Alcuin's letters go far beyond the contemporary standard of clerical learning; he had read Pliny, and was deeply interested in astronomical problems. At Aachen there was even some beginning of discussion of high theological problems, such as would naturally arise in any real Renaissance; but for this Charles was hardly prepared, and he stifled it lest it should lead to the growth of heresy. Indeed in the next century we do find all over the land of the Franks a very considerable amount of theological discussion, which probably owed its origin to the stimulus given to learning by Charles. All such discussion was unpleasing to a Rome sunk in ignorance and temporal greed. But Alcuin was able to get both king and bishops to protest against one new piece of Roman theology; at Irene's Council of Nicæa (787) the adoration of the holy images had been made compulsory, and papal legates who were present had joyfully agreed

to this; but Hadrian was obliged to be content with *allowing* the Franks to adore idols without compelling them to do so.

As regards the relations with the Papacy, brought about by the Frank king's new territorial power in Italy, it is clear that Alcuin quite understood the position, and probably gave Charles the advice on which he finally acted in the year 800. The harmony between pope and king may occasionally have been threatened, but it was never interrupted in the twenty-one years of the rule of Hadrian, who died in 795. Few popes have ever got on so well with a great temporal overlord. Charles wept for his death. Hadrian had been a most zealous steward of Church property, both new and old, and the Papacy soon became again nearly as rich as it had been before Leo confiscated its Sicilian estates. A new danger was however arising, that from the Saracen pirates, who plundered all the Italian coasts and finished off what the wars of Justinian had left of the old Roman harbours, Ostia and Portus; Centumcellæ (*Civita Vecchia*) did not replace them as the principal port till the tenth century, but to defend the harbours the Roman militia was constantly in requisition. That militia was henceforth not so papal in its sympathies as it had been in the seventh century. No doubt its leaders had a good deal to say at papal elections; once or twice, *e.g.*, in the reign of Paul I., the name *Senatus* has reappeared, and apparently means the new nobles or leaders of this militia. It is possible that a similar process was taking place in other Italian cities, and that the germs of municipal self-government would in time arise out of this.

Hadrian was succeeded by Leo III., to whom the early letters of Charles (*i.e.*, of Alcuin) issue an ominous warning against the sin of simony. It is conjecturable that Leo had bribed his way to the chair, but we have absolutely no proof thereof. But he had certainly no support from Constantinople, and was likely to find no friend but Charles, towards whom his tone is, from the first, far more humble than that of Hadrian had

been. The fickle Romans soon began to take advantage of the weakness of their Prince-bishop, and the nephews of the late pope headed a vigorous opposition. Of what they accused Leo we cannot be sure but it was a serious accusation; adultery and perjury are both mentioned, yet there was no attempt to set up any anti-pope. In 799 Leo was attacked, while making a procession through the streets, thrown down and left for dead. According to one story his eyes and tongue were cut out and afterwards miraculously restored to him; at any rate he could both see and speak a year later. He was picked up by his friends, was hidden, and was at last able to escape from Rome; naturally he fled to the court of Charles, who received him well and kept him as guest for several months. His enemies calmly awaited the verdict of the King of the Franks, which they would hardly have done if they had not felt that they had some case.

This put the king of the Franks in a very awkward situation. A task was thrust upon him, and apparently thrust with the good-will of both plaintiff and defendant, of sitting in judgment on the highest spiritual power in Christendom. 'What!' he may have said to himself, 'am I then a sort of Emperor of the West?' Alcuin seems to have felt his way towards such a solution. 'The pope,' he said, 'can be tried by no authority at this moment existing in the world; there is a defect of such authority, for, look you, the emperor at Constantinople has recently been treated by his mother much as the pope has been treated at Rome, and *there is at this moment actually no Roman emperor.* Your Majesty must decide what to do, and your decision should be given at Rome.' Clearly this had but one meaning—the elevation of Charles to the throne of Augustus. If that could be done he, as lord of all the world, might pronounce judgment in this difficult case. Leo had already been sent back to Rome with sufficient escort (November 799); he had been well received, and, after a preliminary examination, his enemies were sent off north. Charles followed Leo in state, and spent two months in Rome at the end of the year 800.

He held a great meeting in St Peter's of his whole court, Frank, Lombard and Italian, and, in the presence of this court, Leo cleared himself of the (to us unknown) accusations by the ordeal of a solemn oath taken on the Gospels. Then, according to the received version of the story, on Christmas Day Leo surprised Charles by placing on his head the crown of the Roman Empire, while the basilica of St Peter rang with shouts of 'Carolus Augustus Imperator.'

'Had I known what the pope was going to do, I wouldn't have come to Church,' says Charles, in Eginhard's *Life*. This is capable of two interpretations. It seems impossible to believe that Charles was surprised into taking the Empire; the question was probably debated long before he crossed the Alps, and all must have been prepared for this solution of it. If Charles used the words, what he probably meant was either 'I should like to have had an official coronation, with all details properly arranged'; or 'I don't like the idea of the pope putting in any claim to *give* me or anyone else the crown of Augustus.' For it is quite clear that this gift, and this power to give, is what later popes successfully read into the story. The extremity of their claim is expressed in the Roman couplet of a later century—

> Rex venit ante fores, jurans prius urbis honores,
> Post *homo fit Papae, sumit quo dante coronam*;

('he becomes the vassal of the pope, and takes the crown as his gift.')[1] Other persons also in the ensuing centuries conceived themselves entitled to a voice in the elevation and even the election of an emperor of the West; in Italy the 'Roman people,' in Germany the heads of the great duchies. As for the former, some dreamer would arise at intervals and call upon the Roman 'senate and people' to act as their namesakes had acted when they conferred the magistracies of the Republic on Augustus twenty-seven years before Christ's birth; such dreamer was usually in

[1] Traditionally this couplet was inscribed by Pope Innocent II. under a picture of the Emperor Lothair II.

opposition to the pope and usually came to a bad end. The claim of the German dukes was more serious for it rested on real fact, the fact, namely, that without their help no German king could come to Italy to get himself crowned emperor; and from their claims those of the seven 'electors' were ultimately derived.

However great the importance of these claims was going to be, it is quite clear that the actual date of this foundation of the 'Holy Roman Empire' (which lasted, on diplomatic parchments at least, for a thousand and six years) was an accidental date, conditioned, first, by the question whether a pope could be tried, and, secondly, by the actual five years' vacancy of the throne of Constantinople. As Emperor, Charles at once condemned the pope's late accusers to death, respited and banished them.

As to the further question, whether Charles was right to make himself emperor, we ought not to expect him to foresee all the consequences. He was a brave, good man, who hated anarchy and felt himself both called and equal to the task of crushing it. Here was anarchy, and the prospect of more, at the old centre, the most venerable spot of the Western world. It was clearly Charles' business to put himself in the best possible position for crushing the hydra.

Many learned treatises have been written about the Holy Roman Empire, with the intention of explaining both what it was believed to be and what it actually was. We must, however, beware of reading any 'theory' about it into the minds of the men of 800 A.D. Vagueness of thought, looseness of political concept, were the rule then even more than now; even Alcuin's mind was probably very hazy on the subject. In speaking of the matter, Alcuin would have claimed that his master was the successor of Augustus and of Constantine; but then he knew little of the power those sovereigns had actually wielded. It is plain that in becoming 'Emperor' Charles did not become ruler of any territory which he had not ruled before. Ruler of most of Northern and Central Italy he had been since the overthrow of Desiderius in 774; ruler

of Spain south of the Ebro he never was; still less was he ruler of the African, Asiatic, or Britannic provinces of the old Roman Empire. On the other hand, he was ruler of much of Germany, which had been quite outside the sphere of the real Rome. Perhaps the best thing we can say is that the 'Roman Empire' had now become more a spiritual concept than anything else.

On his domestic position as King of the Franks the crown of Augustus had little influence; a new oath of allegiance was indeed devised, which perhaps made him a little more holy in the eyes of his churchmen, but that was all. Charles himself was as absolute as any Merovingian king had been, but that was because he was a good, wise, well-beloved, and very strong man; into the future he did not pry, and he did not even make any arrangements for the transmission of the Imperial power on his own death. A lesser successor would gain from his Imperial crown no serious addition of authority over the already strong feudal aristocracy of Franks, Germans, Lombards.

Feudal aristocracy was the waxing force, kingship the waning force. Roman law was everywhere giving way before feudal and Frankish custom. Even Charles in his capitularies, issued almost every year in his armed assemblies or diets of great people, did not abolish tribal custom, did not attempt to introduce any one system of law, although in his general edicts he occasionally overrode customs hitherto deemed sacred. His capitularies, though they may occasionally make additions to law, are really far more administrative regulations than laws in the true sense of the word. A man's 'law' was a thing he inherited, of which he could not divest himself; he 'lived his law,' *i.e.*, as I have said below, he walked about encompassed by an invisible envelope of his law.[1] In Italy, Roman law and Lombard custom were all jumbled up; Roman law gave way there perhaps more slowly than elsewhere, but it gave way a little. In Gaul the old division into *civitates* faded before that into duchies and counties; in Germany the

[1] *Vide infr.*, p. 283, note.

grafschaften and *gaue* represented on the whole old tribal divisions of the peoples. Officials were nearly always chosen from natives of the districts they administered and in which they owned lands, and so were on the high road to become territorial and feudal aristocracy. The *missi* were, indeed, a great feature of Charles' government, and a force distinctly contrary to this tendency, and their activity continued for some half-century after his death; they were either lay or clerical, more often clerical. They travelled at the expense of the province they visited, and their duties included a review of the whole administration, financial, judicial, military and religious. They had to make known all new laws and edicts, to receive oaths of allegiance, to raise rents from royal domain, to hear appeals from the justice of the courts, to recruit for the army, to inquire into the behaviour of the clergy in ritual and morals. In fact one might say that they were the one real sign, annually patent to all men, of the existence of a central government. And one suspects that, as royalty rapidly grew weaker in the reigns of Charles' son and grandsons, the task of the *missi* grew more and more hopeless.

As a leader of a great warlike nation or set of nations, and as military reformer, Charles should occupy a very considerable place in history. His military measures, so far as they may be traced in his capitularies, start from the principle that service in the field was still incumbent on all freemen, under a very heavy fine for non-attendance. But, as this was apparently impossible to enforce, his army was really raised on the plan that each group of small landowners should join together to provide one fully armed man. Every three or every four *mansi* (may an English historian say 'hides of land?'[1]) shall join together to provide such a soldier. There is no pay for any man (but no doubt plenty of booty), and each has to bring with him his own arms, armour, and three months' victuals. Plunder of friends is strictly forbidden, and transport is carefully organised. The proportion of cavalry to infantry increases

[1] The Frankish unit was, however, smaller than the English. (See Vinogradoff, *English Society in the Eleventh Century*, Chapter I.)

steadily; war is therefore becoming more expensive; the cavalry are to carry lance, long and short sword, bow and arrows. Defensive armour is also increasing, and includes helm, shield and mail shirt. The clergy are not exempt from the duty of supplying soldiers for their lands. Strict edicts forbid the export of arms and armour to any foreign country. Other edicts regulate which province is liable to be called out by the *hereban* for any particular war, always on the principle that the nearest fights the nearest. There is much said about siege-trains, and these apparently include pontoons or movable bridges of some sort for crossing rivers. Charles built a great bridge across the Rhine at Mainz, the superstructure of wood, the piers of stone; but it was burned towards the end of his reign. It was a great performance in such an age to build a bridge fourteen hundred feet long. Charles was also great on entrenchments and entrenching tools, on 'burgs' or fortifications—probably of earthen mounds and wood—and on road-making. As for desertion it is equivalent to *heresliz*, which is equivalent to treason, and the penalty is death. Any soldier who gets drunk is to be confined to water for the rest of the campaign; it is even a criminal offence to offer a fellow-soldier a drink.

What, however, did the hierarchy of officials at Constantinople and the self-styled Empress Irene think of the elevation of this Frank? Very little indeed. They seem to have been neither surprised nor displeased, certainly not, as we should have expected them to be, shocked. Perhaps they reflected that, ever since his conquest of Desiderius, Charles had acted as if he were complete sovereign of all Italy north of the Garigliano; perhaps they were pleased that the new Augustus showed little disposition to conquer Sicily or even Naples. No one in the West seems to have suggested that he should make any attempt to follow the first Augustus in vindicating the right of Rome to rule the East as well as the West; and no one in the East seems to have doubted that there would soon again be a 'real' emperor at the real seat of Government—Constantinople. Thus we might almost say that

Constantinople hardly took Charles' new claim and title seriously. Charles' relations with the Eastern Government may be emphatically described as mild. It is not likely to be true that he offered marriage to the murderous Irene, although a respectable Greek historian, Theophanes, asserts that he did so. An embassy from him was actually in Constantinople when Irene and her eunuchs were hurled from power in 802, and Nicephorus, an iconoclast, seized the throne. The change was not to the mind of Carolus Augustus; though the new Eastern emperor fought Arabs and Bulgars valiantly, his fleet also took sailing exercise in the Adriatic, where, if anywhere in Italy, the sympathies of the coast population were again inclining to be Greek. In Charles' later years there was a sort of struggle between the two empires for the lordship of those islands and lagunes which were one day to be Venice. Embassies came to Aachen from the Archbishop of Grado and the 'tribunes' of the Venetians. Once Charles appointed a duke for those parts; but the Greek fleet was on the spot, and the duke had to turn his coat and call himself, in Greek, a *spathar*. Charles was angry, and sent his second son, Pippin, to avenge this, and the result was that, in order to escape Pippin, the Venetians moved from their earlier situations on the mouth of the Brenta, which were perhaps still accessible from the mainland, and laid the keel of their great city on the Rialto. In 811 Nicephorus was killed in battle, and his iconoclastic friends were severely handled when Michael Rhangabes, the candidate of the Church, became Emperor of the East. Michael sought the friendship of Charles and the pope, and even gave to the former the distinctively Imperial title of βασιλεύς; but his reign was short and was fully occupied with a Bulgarian war. On the Danube, indeed, there might have been occasions of quarrel between the two empires had not a thick wedge of heathen savages lain between their spheres of influence. And on matters ecclesiastical they were not likely to quarrel as long as both worshipped stocks and stones.

More interesting, because of the legends that have grown up from it, but not really of more effect on history

is the attitude of Charles to the Caliph of Bagdad. If anything could have tempted him to an Eastern policy, it would have been the sedulous friendship of Caliph Haroun-al-Rashid. It was with Haroun's approval that the Patriarch of Jerusalem in 799 sent gifts to Charles, and sent in the next year the keys of the Holy Sepulchre. Alcuin, indeed, thought that this implied some actual Frankish sovereignty over the most sacred of sites; and the terms in which an embassy from Haroun himself spoke in 807 seemed to suggest the same idea. Haroun was very careful to protect Frank pilgrims to Jerusalem, and a hospice was built for them there. The Moslem had nothing to fear from such persons, for the Greek and Latin monks already nourished a holy abhorrence of each other, and the few Latins who made the difficult journey to Jerusalem were more ill-treated by their Greek fellow-Christians than by the Arabs. Among the gifts which Haroun sent to Charles (802) was an elephant, the first perhaps which had been seen in the West since the fifth century, the only elephant, says Eginhard, which Haroun himself possessed. This dear beast, whose name was Aboulabbas, had a keeper called Isaac the Jew; Charles was imprudent enough to take it with him campaigning against the Danes in 810, and it died in consequence.

The emperor's last military task was to send over the Pyrenees a set of expeditions more successful than that of 778. The Moors in 793 had actually raided as far north as Narbonne, had rolled over a Frank army at Toulouse, and recrossed the mountains laden with booty. We then become aware of a hardy little Christian kingdom in the Asturias Mountains, under an Alfonso II., who was already driving wedges of Christian soldiers into Gallicia. To help him, and to avenge the Moslem raid of two years before, Charles had in 795 sent one of his sons Ludwig (or Louis or Chlodwig or Clovis), afterwards 'Louis the Pious,' who began to conquer southwards towards the Ebro, and so to found the Spanish 'Mark' or 'March.' Perpetual civil war between *Valis* helped such expeditions; rebel Moslems were always coming to Aachen to ask for

help. In 801, after bloody fighting, Barcelona was taken, and young Louis was the first Christian prince to re-enter in triumph a city won back from the infidel. By 812 the Spanish March was in a fair way to be organised as a province of Charles' Empire; it included the valley of the Ebro, and was in close alliance with the old Spanish Christians, the name of whose capital, Oviedo (Sheeptown) suggests their pastoral simplicity of habits. In 809 Caliph Haroun of Bagdad died, and the ensuing strife for the caliphate suggested to the Ommiads of Cordova the hope of once more becoming the leaders of Islam; the Mediterranean was red with Moslem blood shed by Moslem sailors. Christendom gained by this strife, and the Balearic isles were temporarily recovered from the Moors.

Charles died in 814, in the seventy-fifth year of his life and the forty-seventh year of his reign. To measure his greatness by any such standards as those of antiquity, of the later Middle Ages, or of modern times, is impossible. Of his own Dark Ages he is, with the exception of our own Alfred, the solitary figure that attains true greatness. He had none of the chances of Augustus, of Trajan, of Constantine, or of Justinian; not even those of William the Conqueror. He had to make his Renaissance, his civilisation, almost to make his Europe. Our Europe owes an unbounded debt to this strong, brave man. He gave it a breathing space between two periods of anarchy. He set it an ideal. He cleared the ground for the development of civilisation, on slightly new lines it is true, but still on lines that ran far back into the Roman Empire. He began the reconciliation of the Romance and the Teutonic elements of culture; he laid deep and strong foundations for Christian Germany; he started afresh the energies of Christian Spain. Pious and deeply devoted as he was to Holy Church, he yet knew well how to keep popes and churchmen in their proper place, and actually kept them there.

In person Charles was not the majestic figure which looks gravely down upon us from the place of honour on the walls of the Kaiser-Saal at Frankfort, for he seems to

have been beardless, red-faced and fat. Eginhard says, he was tall, 'seven feet high,' but, as he adds 'not exceeding the just measure of man,' we think that Eginhard's 'feet' were not ours. All evidence, indeed, goes to show that men in the Middle and Dark Ages were smaller than they are in our days ; and a seven-foot man can now earn a very fair living in a show. Anyhow Charles was a great athlete, and a mighty hunter in the Ardennes and Vosges[1] forests. It is pleasant to picture him going a-hunting, surrounded by his family, especially, like a patriarchal Irish squire, by a large troupe of unmarried daughters. He was also fond of swimming in the warm baths at Aachen, and delighted in swimming-parties with a crowd of his friends. He liked giving audiences while he was dressing in the morning; perhaps this was the origin of the French king's *levée*. He was very abstemious in his drink, but always hungry and a great eater of meat, plain, 'roast and boiled.' He hated doctors, but was fond of prescribing for himself.

[1] These great forests probably then stretched from the sources of the Saône to the Meuse and were full of wild cattle and elk ; perhaps even the aurochs survived there into Caroling times.

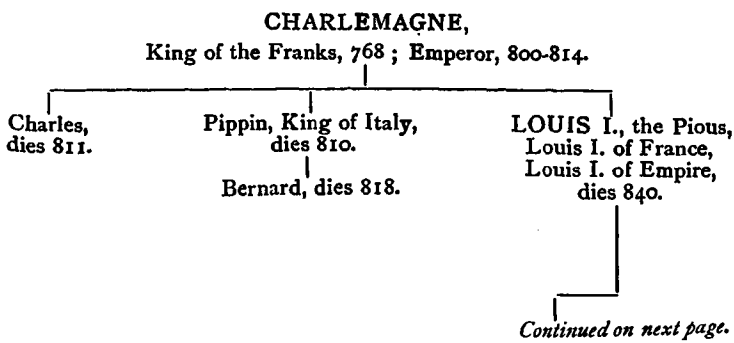
ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER VIII

The TIME covered is, roughly, the ninth century.

The most important EVENTS are—(1) The raids of the Scandinavian Vikings on the coasts of Gaul and Germany, which are foreshadowed even before the death of Charlemagne and last well into the tenth century. (2) The raids of the Saracens upon Italy, beginning about 827 in Sicily, and going on well into the tenth century. (3) The appearance at the end of the century of a new set of raiders from the East, the Hungarians. All these raids were made worse by—(4) The civil wars between the son and grandsons of Charlemagne, beginning about 830; it is these wars which contribute most to the establishment of separate kingdoms in France and Germany. Then (5) there is the growing weakness of the Imperial power in Italy, until the Imperial crown looks as if it were almost a gift of the Pope. (6) The growing pretensions of the Papacy, marked especially by the reign of Nicholas I. (858-867), and the publication of the 'false decretals'; the Frankish Church especially struggles against these pretensions.

The chief ACTORS are:—

(1) The Carolingian family.


CHARLEMAGNE,
King of the Franks, 768; Emperor, 800-814.
Charles, dies 811.
Pippin, King of Italy, dies 810.
Bernard, dies 818.
LOUIS I., the Pious, Louis I. of France, Louis I. of Empire, dies 840.
Continued on next page.

LOUIS I., the Pious—*Continued.*

- **LOTHAIR**, Lothair I. of Empire, gets 'Middle Kingdom,' called Lorraine, in 843, dies 855.
  - **LOUIS II.**, of Empire, holds only Italy, dies 875.
  - **Lothair II.**, in Lorraine, dies 869.
    - Bertha.
      - Hugh of Provence, 'King of Italy,' dies 947.
        - Lothair, King of Italy, dies 950, married to Adelaide (daughter of Rudolf II. of Burgundy), who afterwards marries Otto I. of Germany and Empire.
      - Guy Margrave of Tuscany.
- **Gisela.**
  - Berenger I., King of Italy, Emperor, 915, dies 924.
    - Gisela.
      - Berengar II., King of Italy, dies 966.
        - Adalbert.
- **Pippin**, dies 838.
- **LOUIS, THE GERMAN**, 'King of East Franks,' 833, dies 876.
  - Carloman, invited to take Imperial Crown, but does not get it, dies 880.
    - a bastard
      - **ARNULF**, King of Germany, 888, Emperor, 896, dies 899.
        - **LOUIS, THE CHILD**, dies 911, last Caroling King of Germany.
  - Louis, the Young, dies 882.
  - **CHARLES, THE FAT**, Charles III. of Empire, reigns in Germany from 880, Emperor, 881, reigns in France from 885; last who united all three, dies 888.
- **CHARLES, THE BALD**, Charles II. of France, Charles II. of Empire, 'King of West Franks,' 841, Emperor, 876, dies 877.
  - **LOUIS II.**, of France, 'the Stammerer,' dies 879.
    - **LOUIS III.**, of France, dies 882.
    - Carloman, dies 884.
    - **CHARLES, THE SIMPLE**, Charles III. of France. (See Table, Chapter IX.)

(2) The very puzzling rulers in Upper and Lower 'Burgundy' (the later Franche-Comte, Dauphiné, and Provence).

UPPER BURGUNDY.

Conrad I.
(?) married a daughter of Louis the Pious.

Conrad II.

- Rudolf I., dies 911.
  - Rudolf II., adds LOWER BURGUNDY, getting it from Hugh of Provence, King of Italy, 930 or 933, dies 937.
- Adelaide.
  - RAOUL, King of France, 923-936.

LOWER BURGUNDY.

- Boso, dies 887, marries a daughter of Emperor Louis II.
  - **LOUIS**, Louis III. of Empire, Emperor, 901, blinded, 905, dies 928.
- Lothair II. of Lorraine, dies 869. (See last Table.)
  - Bertha.
    - Hugh of Provence, who seizes Lower Burgundy (see last Table), surrenders it, 930, and becomes King of Italy, dies 947.

CONRAD III.

Adelaide. (See last Table.)

Continued on next page.

UNITED BURGUNDY—*Continued.*

Conrad III.,
dies 993.

Rudolf III., died 1032.	Bertha, Wife of Robert II. of France.	Gisela, Wife of Henry, the Quarrelsome, of Bavaria.

Note.—Guy Margrave of Spoleto, died 894, and his Son, Lambert, died 898, each of whom for a moment wore the Imperial Crown, were also Carolings by distant female descent.

(3) A quite unimportant and brief dynasty in the 'Eastern Empire' is the 'Phrygian' dynasty.

MICHAEL II.,
820-829.

THEOPHILUS,
829-842.

MICHAEL III.,
842-867.

To them succeeded the Macedonian (or Armenian) dynasty with BASIL I., 867-886. (See Table in Argument of Chapter IX.)

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHILDREN STILL CLINGING TOGETHER

AUT nihil aut Cæsar vult dici Borgia. Quidni?
Cum simul et Cæsar possit et esse nihil.

IF it is not wholly true to say that in the ninth and tenth centuries the Children of the Roman Empire are still clinging together, it is at least true to say that in their better moods they feel that they ought to cling together. They grope for their mother's apron strings, ragged and worn as these have become; they even try to weave her a new apron and pretend it is the old one. There are really only three children left to cling and grope, Italy, France and Germany; though the last was originally but a grandchild, her circumstances have assured her a lot in the inheritance. Spain and England, one day to find their way back into the charmed circle, are as yet quite cut off; Spain, indeed, is under the temporary influence of an alien culture, the Arabic; England is 'bedding the plinth of the days to come' all by herself or under the Scandinavian hammer. Constantinople with all its traditions goes on claiming to be the seat of Empire, and occasionally putting out a long if feeble paw into the Western world, where it still possesses a territorial interest in the heel and toe of Italy and, for a time, in Sicily. But in reality, both in its strengths and weaknesses, it has become definitely Eastern, and even Professor Bury will now allow us to call its territory 'the Eastern Empire,' though, when we meet its soldiers and ambassadors in Western Europe, we shall more commonly speak of them as 'Greeks.'

The lands under Islam (Spain, Africa, Egypt, Syria, Persia) retain here and there a substratum of Roman civilisation; but it is getting trodden deeper underground every day, and only in Spain will it ever come to the surface again. These lands are, moreover, torn with feuds of their own, and the two caliphates of Bagdad and Cordova are tending to break up into Emirates, almost before the Western Caliphate is called by that name (929). The developments and trials of Islam were not wholly unlike those of Christianity. Each religion to some extent sopped up the heathen cults which it met, and took on the manners and ideas of the peoples whom it conquered. Each from time to time was, on its militant and proselytising side, reinvigorated, Islam by the Abbassids and, later on, by the Seljukian Turks, Christendom by the Carolings and the Saxons in the West, by the Isaurian and Macedonian Houses in the East. Both faiths had real and earnest schools of learning, and the world owes something to the disputations held, and to the treatises written at Bagdad and Cordova, though far more to the remains of antiquity preserved by the Christian monks. Each faith was exposed to hostile barbarians on its northern and eastern frontiers; what the Danes, Slavs, Bulgars, Russians, and Hungarians were to Christendom, the Tartar and Turkish tribes were to Islam; and each ultimately succeeded in incorporating these enemies with itself. But Islam never gripped so deep into the life of the races it absorbed as Christianity did; it changed their outlook on life far less; it was more tolerant of differences, less persevering as a mandate from on high, more manifestly a conqueror of this world's goods. And so peoples went much more to pieces under its rule; its lands worked out their destinies, if not untouched by the remains of Greek and Roman thought, yet without absorbing much of those remains into their political life.

But the three children within the fold have again, in the year 800, got a rallying point at the ancient capital, Rome. Except for a dismal period of anarchy lasting thirty-eight years (924-962), there is always

somebody in the West who calls himself 'Emperor' and 'Augustus,' though he does not reign at Rome, indeed, usually goes there only to receive the crown and then scuttles back North again. The existence of this Imperial name is the main thing which prevents each of the children from setting up house separately for himself; and it makes it impossible for us to say when Germany, Italy and France became three nations. I should like to say that something like this definitely happened in 987, when Hugh Capet became King of France, if not much earlier; but then Hugh Capet makes the reader stare and gasp by writing to Constantinople (of all places in the world!) and assuring its ruler that he will not allow the Germans to violate the frontiers of the 'Roman Empire'! The truth is that, loosely as we think now about all political conceptions, men in the Dark Ages thought still more loosely. We must, therefore, in the present chapter, try and think along two usually but not always parallel lines. On one of these lines we must regard the three children as an united family, threatened with dreadful danger from without; and on the other line we must trace the process of their separation into three racial and linguistic groups within the 'Western Empire.' We shall not be able to keep the lines from occasionally crossing each other.

The danger from without in the ninth and even in the tenth century was very great. The Danes (using the word generically for all 'Northmen') and the Slavs, both heathens, were capable of driving deep wedges of heathenism into Germany and France, and actually drove them. Before either of these dangers was over there came a fresh wave of barbarism with the invasions of the Hungarians, a race akin to the later Turks; this threatened all three children alike. And, in the South, Islam had an excellent series of strategic points for attacking both the Eastern and Western empires. In nine years out of every ten some Moslem fleet was the dominant power in the Western Mediterranean, and the Moslem got hold not only of Crete (823) but of the greatest of

all Mediterranean islands, Sicily. And so deep was the hatred between Greek and Latin Christians, that we may guess that neither Rome nor Constantinople would have cared much if the other had fallen. Charles the Great had had two Imperial capitals, Rome and Aachen; and in the middle of the ninth century Rome and Aachen were in imminent danger at the very same time.[1] Charles' successors were quite unable to defend the whole Empire at the same time, and were usually unable to defend even the frontier which was in the greater danger. But some of them tried their best to do so.

Looking forward along our other line of thought we shall see that, though we cannot yet speak of separate nations of France, Germany and Italy, Germany at least is going to be a great nation. In the tenth century she will begin what her historians call her *Heldenzeit*, her 'heroic age.' Her rulers will, rightly or wrongly, claim to be Charlemagne's successors (and Charlemagne had been king in much of Germany), and will fight gallantly, and on the whole with increasing success, the battle of civilisation against Danes, Slavs and Hungarians. With less success, though with equal devotion, they will take up Charlemagne's other task, that of rescuing, for Christendom's sake, from the deepest degradation, the self-styled head of Christendom, the pope. They will pursue this task with romantic fidelity till they imperil the national existence of Germany itself.

France on the other hand is going to behave differently. Few sparks of heroism will as yet illumine her, unless it be in the gallant year-long defence of Paris against the Northmen in 885-6. Her kings are indeed the successors of Charlemagne, and, in a kind of way, they recognise throughout the ninth century their obligations to fulfil his European tasks. But after that date Italy and romance are to have no charms for them for many

[1] In the year 846 the Saracens burnt and sacked the suburbs of Rome, and between 845 and 851 the Northmen, who sacked Paris for the first time in 845, raided far up Meuse and Rhine towards Aachen. The latter was actually sacked in 881 or 882.

centuries to come. The degradation of the papacy will suggest to French bishops mainly the idea of setting up a national Church almost independent of Rome. The people west of Rhine are between the hammer of the great nobles (who grew out of the officials of Charlemagne's Court) and the anvil of the dying monarchy of his descendants. The traditions and duties of Charlemagne will therefore gradually pass to the German kings, and France will draw apart to work out her own destiny. That destiny will keep her eyes fixed northwards and eastwards for several centuries; it is German, Scandinavian and English attacks that she will have to encounter, and so her centre of power will be fixed at some point in the North whence these attacks can best be watched.

Italy meanwhile can do nothing apart. The mere existence of Rome, the mere legend of her past will ensure for Italy only too active an interest on the part of her northern neighbours. The surprising thing about her history, in the period before us, is that she begins to take on new life rather independently of her surroundings. If one looks merely at her treatment by Saracens in the ninth, Hungarians in the tenth century, by Greeks in the South, by Franks and other Teutons in the North, by unspeakably degraded popes in her centre, and by turbulent persons of Lombard descent everywhere, one wonders that the human race cared to survive or till her fields. In the beginning of the reign of John X. it was said that no pilgrim dared to approach the shrine of the apostles for fear of Saracen brigands; in the reign of John XII., that no woman dared come for fear of the pope himself, who kept a harem in the Lateran Palace. Yet the scouts of the Hungarian invaders in 898 reported that North Italy was a thickly peopled country full of 'most fortified' towns. When these barbarians burned Pavia in 924, they burned forty-four churches and two live bishops in it. And in the South a spirit of civic independence is awake early in the ninth century; Naples, Amalfi, Gaeta, Bari, Capua, Salerno are cities with fierce, stirring and intelligent seafaring populations

at a date when we can only say this with certainty of one Northern community, Venice. The South had in fact retained, from its long and late association with Constantinople, a good deal of military valour as well as of intelligence, while all had been dark in Rome and north of Rome. These half Greek cities were, moreover, the first to be exposed to Saracen attacks, and got perhaps a considerable infusion of Saracen blood, distinctly a fighting and adventurous blood. Again, the fiercer of the Lombard nobles, rather than submit to the Franks, had moved southwards and brought another stream of fighting blood with them. No scruples of religion restrained either nobles or cities from occasional alliances with Saracens; on one thing all were set, and that was not to submit to the 'Western emperor,' whether he were a Frank or a Saxon, a Provençal, or a native Italian. Equally determined were the same nobles and cities not to submit to the popes. Though some of them professed Latin Christianity, the majority were probably of the Greek Church. Southern Italy and Sicily had been included in one 'Theme' and governed from Syracuse by a Greek General (στρατηγός); and, when Leo III. confiscated the Pope's Sicilian property in 733, he confiscated whatever farms the pope had owned in Southern Italy also. Nothing had contributed more powerfully to the growing hostility between the two churches than this confiscation, and the Southern princes and cities made the fullest and most practical use of this hostility, in order to maintain an independent position.

In Rome itself some civic consciousness can be traced. I told you in the last chapter of the growing dislike of the Roman aristocracy for the popes; that is going to develop and to become very fierce. Fiercer still will be the hostility to the emperors (especially to the strong and good ones), who from time to time visit Rome either to vindicate a claim to the crown of Charlemagne, or to cleanse the Augean stable of the papacy. The only popes with whom the Roman nobles will occasionally get on well are those who quite neglect their spiritual duties,

who become mere fighting men, engaged in leading their people either against the Saracens or against some neighbouring prince or some neighbouring city, like Palastrina or Tivoli, which is again becoming a rival to Rome, as Præneste and Tibur had been in the days of the Volscians. But, though there will often be an Imperial faction among the nobles, with no emperor at all will Rome as a whole ever get on well; although perhaps she is not unwilling to admit that in theory there ought to be an emperor. So we shall see at the end of the tenth century the ridiculous spectacle of a crowned Augustus, Lord of all the Western world if titles can make him so, besieged in his own palace in the Capital of his World, or engaged in a losing street fight with 'his Romans.'

Even beyond Rome some spirit of independence will spread northwards in Italy before the year 1000, though it will not bear much fruit before the twelfth century. We shall find it most developed where there is a powerful bishop. Such bishop is usually supposed to be a *missus*, or agent of the Western emperor; at any rate he acts as such when no special agent is sent, and none are sent at all after 885. From absent emperors he will squeeze charters and feudal rights for himself: he will collect tolls and dues; he can use and perhaps does use them to repair the city walls. In due time his citizens will squeeze somewhat similar privileges out of him, and will become a powerful 'commune.' Thus on the whole we may conclude that the Italian 'nationality' was growing more precociously than the French or German and more variously. 'The Italians,' says the shrewd Bishop of Cremona, Liutprand, himself of Lombard-Italian birth, 'like to have two rulers at the same time so that the fear of the one may keep the other weak.' The letters of the Aquitanian Gerbert, even before he became pope as Sylvester II. in 999, teem with allusions to the bad faith and cowardice of the Italians. But the Italians were going to be a very practical people; their secular schools were by no means dead; even classical literature and

theology were to some extent studied in them, but before all things the practical sciences of law and medicine. In tenth-century Rome all art, even that of architecture, was lost, though it revived in the North in the so-called Lombard style.

The system of all three countries, France, Germany and Italy rests upon the idea that there shall be an emperor, and, at least in the ninth century, that he shall be of Caroling blood. Even when he ceases to be of Caroling blood, he ought to do as Charles did and to rule as Charles ruled. The pope ought to crown him, and at Rome, and Aachen ought to be his other capital.

He ought also to be 'King of Italy,' or one of his sons ought to be so. This crown he ought to take at Pavia, and it is really the old Lombard crown. He ought to confirm the election of each pope, who ought not to be consecrated without such confirmation. He ought to keep one or more *missi* or Imperial judges or administrators in Rome, with power in the last resort of overriding the papal tribunals. He ought to appoint counts to govern the counties, into which Italy, like the rest of the Empire, is supposed to be divided. Such at least was the imaginary Carolingian constitution. In practice it never worked at all. The whole tendency of the age was to smelt the comparatively small counties into great duchies or marks, and so we shall soon hear of 'Markgraves' (Marquises) of Turin, Asti, Ivrea, Verona, Friuli, Tuscany, Ancona; and, further south, of great duchies of Spoleto, Benevento, Salerno and Capua—all tending to become hereditary, and usually working out their salvation (or its reverse) in armed rebellion or mutual civil war.

If there is not a direct Caroling to be found to wear the Imperial crown, the popes will turn either to an indirectly descended Caroling, or finally to quite a new line, the Saxon (962). For, in defiance of both old and new tradition, very soon after Charles the Great's death, it is the popes who make emperors; and they do so in order to get help either against the Saracens or against

their own nobles; also their power to do so was almost the only thing which kept them even nominally at the head of Christendom; for their private record, both as bishops and men, was too often a futile or an atrocious one. Much lamentation has been raised over the fact that they did not create a native Italian dynasty, and back it up with all their spiritual thunders; but to do that would have been to cut their own throats, both as temporal sovereigns and independent bishops. We have read also many laments over the 'foolish vanity' of the German kings in meddling with the Imperial crown at all; why, it is asked, did they not leave Italy alone and keep their own turbulent people in order? But I say, with the old German historians, that it was not vanity at all that underlay the claims, and prompted the acts of the Ottos and their successors down to the middle of the thirteenth century; rather it was a high sense of duty to Christendom, whose unity they sought to preserve. Charlemagne's Empire had been a 'Western Christian Republic' under one Imperial head, a World Church-and-State. Nationalities proved too strong for this ideal, but surely as an ideal it was worth fighting for. And so after this preface, we may pass to consider the ninth century somewhat more in detail.

Charlemagne left but one surviving son, 'Louis I.' of French history, who is also 'Louis I.'[1] in the succession to the Holy Roman Empire of the West. Louis was thirty-six at his accession and had already been crowned co-emperor. He was a man of some physical strength, a mighty hunter, and of such pure and upright life that he earned from historians the epithet of 'The Pious.' He had sat at the feet of Benedict of Aquitaine (or 'of Aniane'), who had been the interpreter of the monasticism of St Benedict of Nursia to South-western Gaul. He was well-educated, knew Latin thoroughly, and perhaps some Greek; he dearly loved the Church and would have liked to love the churchmen, if these had not in his

[1] Perhaps when he is in Germany we ought to call him Ludwig I.; but let us not be pedantic.

misfortunes treated him shamefully. He took great pains to see that monks kept their *regula*, he provided endowments for poor parish priests. But he was deeply emotional in his religion, and too often at the mercy of those who could play upon his emotions. He had already three flourishing sons, who treated him even worse than his bishops did. Through all his troubles and follies I think we can distinguish a sort of dogged passivity; he allowed himself to be bullied (almost into a monastery) and exhibited a pitiful spectacle; but he clung tenaciously to the idea that he was still emperor in spite of all they could do to him, and died very fairly successful if not triumphant. It is quite possible that he had in middle life serious thoughts of becoming a monk; but then, monks were not allowed to hunt, and he couldn't give up his favourite sport.

His court was full of learned men and of (presumably wise) old administrators of Charlemagne. The most famous of the former was Raban Maur, a pupil of Alcuin, to whom in 822 Louis gave the Abbey of Fulda. Raban, like Francis Bacon, took all knowledge to be his province and wrote a famous book *De Universo* ('about everything'). It was a simple age when all available knowledge could be compressed into one ponderous tome. Raban was a stout Imperialist and died Archbishop of Mainz in 856. Another somewhat later learned courtier of Louis was Walafrid Strabo, who not only wrote a sort of Νέκυια, called *De Visionibus Wettini*, but also the first mediæval book on gardening. The swing which Charlemagne had given to learning and independent thought among his clergy produced also among the French bishops at least two men daring enough to protest against many of the favourite doctrines and practices of the Roman Church, Claudius of Turin and Agobard of Lyons. Both were deeply read in the theology of St Augustine, and both condemned wholesale the worship of images and relics, the use of the crucifix, the devotion to pilgrimages and saints. Agobard was also quite sceptical as to the merits of trial by ordeal, which the age called 'appeal

to the judgment of God.'. As both Agobard and Claudius were natives of Spain, it seems possible that the proximity of Moslem theology, with its rigid puritanism, may have influenced their youth. Such men handed on the torch of independent thought to men like John 'the Scot,' the most independent thinker of Europe in the Dark Ages, to Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims (845-82), and to Gerbert, who held the same see at the end of the tenth century. Any self-respecting pope in the fifteenth or sixteenth century would have been obliged to burn John and Agobard, and would probably have burned Hincmar or Gerbert. But then, as Luther said, he would also have had to burn St Augustine and St Paul.

One supposes that a man like Agobard would not, in the coming troubles, have turned a bitter enemy of Louis wholly without excuse; one feels almost sure that Wala, Abbot of Corbey, a descendant of Charles Martel, a thoroughly trained administrator of Charlemagne, had also some good cause for his temporary appearance on the same side. But the whole story of the reign is very dark. One thing only is clear, that, throughout the ninth and far into the tenth century, two principles were struggling for the mastery among the Franks and other Germanic tribes; the idea of unity of the Empire, and the idea of equal division of property among sons. If, as we all wish to do in theory, we keep the whole of Charlemagne's dominions in one hand, what is to become of the deeply rooted principle of heredity? None of the capitularies of Charlemagne had touched this question as to the future; but, inasmuch as during his life he had given Aquitaine to one son to rule and Italy to another, we may presume his views to have been in favour of equal division. It so happened that all his legitimate sons except Louis had died before him, yet to Bernard, son of Pippin, he had confirmed Pippin's kingdom of Italy in the last year of his own life; Bernard, however, was to be distinctly dependent on Louis.

Unity of a sort, then, was for a moment secured in 814 and Louis, coming from Aquitaine, was well received in

Aachen. The new pope, Stephen IV., came to France in 816 and crowned him afresh at Rheims; Louis prostrated himself at the pope's feet, which was a thing Charlemagne would never have done. Charlemagne, in fact, would have said, 'I have not yet been asked, Holy Father, to confirm your election.' Both Stephen and his successor in the next year, Paschal I., took the papal chair without waiting for any Imperial confirmation. Indeed, the popes during the next century seldom troubled themselves about this formality.[1]

No sooner, however, was unity thus secured, than heredity thrust up its head. Bishop Agobard attributed the origin of the event of 817 to Louis himself; it is more likely that it originated with the 'great men,' the future aristocracy of the Franks, both lay and clerical. Such men would have more power if the Empire were not wholly in the hands of one ruler. Anyhow in 817, 'after much prayer and fasting,' Louis divided the administration of his Empire between his three sons, Lothair aged nineteen, Pippin aged eleven, and Louis aged eight. That is to say he divided both the immediate rents and profits and the future succession after his own death between these three. Into the geographical details of this and the several subsequent partitions I don't propose to enter; they had little real racial meaning. The leading idea of them was perhaps that the revenues of each son should be about equal; such delimitations as were made, generally though not exclusively, followed the boundaries of the dioceses and counties. Roughly speaking, with Aquitaine would usually go Gascony, Septimania and the Spanish Mark, with the duty of watching against Moslem both by sea and land; with Bavaria would go the Eastern Marks, with the duty of watching and fighting the Slavs. A

[1] The whole question if the Western Empire ever made good in practice the right to *confirm* the newly elected pope before his consecration, is well treated by Duchesne in his notes to the *Liber Pontificalis* (see especially vol. ii., p. 83). The right to *elect* or even to take part in the election was never claimed by an emperor even in theory; and so the nomination of popes by the Saxon emperors was a manifest violation of the rights of the 'Roman clergy and people.'

capitulary of 817 settled this first division, and it was evidently considered a very solemn, and even a religious act. Lothair was to be co-emperor with his father, and to him was assigned the kingdom of Italy (with the task of seeing that Roman nobles and popes behaved themselves decently), and, on his father's death, he was to enjoy some sort of supremacy over his brothers. If Lothair were to die childless one of his two brothers was to be chosen emperor. For his own life Louis was to be supreme over all three. Pope Paschal I. sent a legate to the Diet which made this arrangement, and the legate *perhaps* took back with him to Rome a document called a 'Privilege' giving most of Southern Italy, Corsica, Sardinia and Sicily, in full *dominium* to St Peter; giving also to the Romans complete freedom of election to the papacy and removing the need for Imperial confirmation. If this document is genuine and not rather a forgery of the next century, it is virtually an abdication of all Charlemagne's position. It purports to be attested by Louis himself and his three sons; of whom it is unlikely that little Louis could attest.

Lothair and his father seem to have got on well for a time. Both promoted the missionary work of Archbishop Ebbo of Rheims and of St Anscharius in Denmark and Sweden; a Danish 'king' came to Mainz or to Ingelheim and was baptised with many followers. An archbishopric was founded at Hamburg, which in later years had to retreat before the Danes to Bremen on the Weser. On that river was founded a 'New' Corbey, called after the Abbey of Old Corbey on the Somme, and this became a famous centre of light and learning in lately heathen Saxony. Both Lothair and Louis interested themselves also in the fortunes of the Spanish Christians, who were now in good earnest rising against the Emir of Cordova. I cannot discover that they sent substantial help; and yet a few thousand sturdy Franks might perhaps have done much to win the whole peninsula back to Christendom, for the little Christian communities in the North-western mountains were gaining ground under Alfonso II., while Toledo and Merida long held out in insurrection.

In 819 Louis, who had lost his first wife, married the beautiful and clever Judith, daughter of a Count Welf of Bavaria. There had already been a little trouble in Italy where Bernard, whom Charlemagne had recognised as under-king there, had been passed over in the family arrangement of 817; he rebelled and was defeated, was blinded and died. But in 823 the real trouble began with the birth to Judith and Louis of a son, who was afterwards to be Charles the Bald ('Charles II.' of France, 'Charles II.' of the Empire). Judith, whom the monkish chroniclers report as something worse than a minx, at least brought up her son to a love of learning and learned men. Now it was certainly in accordance with Frankish custom that Charles should have a share in his father's inheritance. But such a share could only come from a diminution of the shares of one or all of his half-brothers. Lothair, the eldest, was apparently willing to agree to this; but he, too, had recently married a daughter of the powerful Count of Tours, and perhaps we may best seek for the cause of civil war in the rivalry of the two ladies, Judith and her step-son's wife.

Lothair for the moment was busy in Italy, whither he went to be crowned at Rome in 823. He took with him Wala as his chief adviser. He held assizes at Rome very much against the will of Pope Paschal; on Paschal's death Eugenius II. was elected pope, and the young emperor imposed on him in 824 the 'Constitution of Lothair.' This document fully establishes that popes need Imperial confirmation (and this very much shakes one's faith in the genuineness of the 'Privilege' of 817), makes the Romans swear fealty to the emperor, asserts that the emperor is to have the right to confirm the judges named by the pope, and allows each Roman citizen to choose whether he will 'live' Roman, Frankish, or Lombard law.[1] Whether the

[1] Here we have perhaps the first clear statement of the mediæval notion that law is personal not territorial, and that a man walks about encompassed by an invisible envelope or atmosphere of his own particular law. Agobard of Lyons writes that 'one may see five men sitting together, each living under a separate system of law.' How this tangle of separate systems of jurisprudence in one and the same

'Constitution' gave to the Romans any privilege as against the pope we don't know; certainly many years passed without a civic insurrection at Rome such as had been of almost yearly occurrence since 814. It would have been a good thing both for Italy and the rest of the Empire if Lothair and Wala had stayed south of the Alps.

For they came back to foment the trouble that was already brewing at the court of Louis and Judith. In this trouble the clergy were evidently the leaders, Agobard of Lyons and Ebbo of Rheims at their head. The lay nobles were divided; but Louis had irritated some of them by deposing two leading counts (one of them Lothair's father-in-law) and putting all his trust in his godson, Count Bernard of Septimania, whose business should have been to watch the Spanish Mark against the Moors. Bernard left his proper task and came to court, where he at once became all powerful with the empress. He swore that Baby Charles should soon have a fine strip of territory out of the shares of his brothers; probably he took the lead of the royalists entirely into his own hands and was a bad leader. Louis accordingly in 829, without consulting his Diet, allotted to Charles a strip which took something from Pippin and something from young Louis, and at the same time ordered Lothair back to Italy. In the same year the clergy, in full synod, threw down a deliberate challenge to the emperor, and indeed to all secular rulers, by asserting that the power of the Church is above that of the State, and that a king who does not reign in 'piety, justice, and mercy' is a tyrant, and so on. It is difficult to see the exact connection between the irritation of the clergy and that of the young princes; but evidently no one liked

territory worked in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries is one of the puzzles of the Dark Ages, and I have had already to confess that I see no satisfactory solution of the puzzle. But as the races intermarried, and all distinction between Roman (Gaul, Italian, or Spaniard) and barbarian (Frank, Lombard, Goth) got obliterated, some sort of mixed jurisprudence, based on 'the custom of the courts' of each king in each kingdom, probably grew up; and the basis of this would be rather barbarised Roman law than Romanised barbarian law.

Bernard, and the clergy had the ear of the army leaders. The result was that, in 830, Bernard fled back to Septimania, Louis was obliged to give way, to send his wife to a nunnery at Poitiers, and to replace in their offices the counts whom he had deposed. It was a change of ministry, but not quite a revolution. In the next two years Louis got the upper hand again, recalled Judith to court, and had an outward reconciliation with his sons.

This did not last long and a sort of civil war broke out in 833. The details do not matter; occasionally one of the sons turns royalist, more often all three are in rebellion. The most important, and one of the most curious events is the fact that Pope Gregory IV. was brought in by Lothair, nominally as a mediator, in reality to take entirely the side of the rebels. I say it was curious, for the very bishops who welcomed him were distinctly nationalist and anti-papal in some respects, whereas Louis' own attitude to the papacy had been one of great subservience. For a moment, when Gregory appeared between the two armies, Louis was firm and said: 'Holy Father, why are you here? I did not authorise you to leave your bishopric'; but the mere name of the pope was enough to seduce most of Louis' soldiers into the rebel camp. This desertion of the emperor afterwards got the name of the 'Field of Lies.' The bishops met in synods at Colmar and Compiègne, declared Louis deposed and Lothair sole emperor. Judith was banished to Italy. Louis was left in a monastery at Soissons, and compelled to do penance for sins which he can hardly have believed himself to have committed. But he patiently refused to become a monk.

The laity seem very soon to have woke up to the fact that this solution of the problems of the Empire was most undesirable. It was simply the triumph of a few great bishops. Not even the pope was pleased when he had returned to Italy. Wala thoroughly rallied to the royalist cause, and, best of all, both the younger brothers refused to recognise Lothair as sole emperor; Lothair had overreached himself. So Pippin and young Louis took up

arms for their father (834), and Louis, having been through the form of an absolution, joined them in the field; Judith, too, returned and joined her husband. Lothair found himself the dupe of a second 'Field of Lies,' for his army deserted him and he had to retire to Italy. Louis resumed full power and suspended though he dared not depose Archbishop Ebbo of Rheims, who had inflicted grievous humiliations on him. He was able in his last years to reconcile himself with Lothair, to make large settlements of territory on his youngest son Charles, and to pass over altogether the sons of his second son Pippin, who died in 838. Finally he was able to cut out of the entail his third son Louis, and to make war upon him when he resisted. Thus when the emperor died in 840, it was with the intention of leaving all, more or less equally, between Lothair and Charles.

Such a settlement was not in the least likely to be permanent. Lothair and Louis were now in middle life with growing-up sons, and Charles was a young man of seventeen; one supposes he was not yet Charles 'the Bald.' Lothair at once took up his father's claim for 'unity of empire,' and at once the disruptive forces got to work against him; the two younger brothers, hitherto bitter enemies, were quite prepared to join forces, Charles basing his power on Northern France, Louis on Southern Germany. From henceforth Louis is to be called for distinction 'Louis the German.' Lothair might have been strong enough to fight either of his brothers singly, but not both at once. He had partisans on both sides of the Rhine, and could always incite Aquitaine (already the classic land of turbulent knights) and Brittany against 'Francia,' as Northern Gaul was now beginning to be called; he could also incite the Saxons, who thoroughly disliked the Bavarians and East Franks (shall we already call them 'Franconians'?) led by Louis from the Danube and the Main. Some churchmen but by no means all were for Lothair; Ebbo of course was for him. His old friend Gregory IV. was not favourable, for during his recent stay in Italy Lothair had confiscated some papal farms.

Before the year was out Frankish armies were confronting each other in civil war, and had shed blood on both sides of the Rhine; and at last a great battle took place at Fontenay-en-Puisaye near Auxerre (841). Lothair fought desperately in the thickest of the fray but was utterly beaten; the bishops in his brothers' camp declared it to be the judgment of God. Without accepting the statement of the chronicle of Regino, Abbot of Prüm (died 915), that 40,000 Franks fell, we may well believe that the flower of the old Frankish army was annihilated; with the Franks as one people it was all over. It was this battle which was followed by the famous oath of Strassburg (842), in which Charles (the West Frank) and Louis the German (East Frank) swore, and made their army leaders swear to stand by each other. Louis, in order to be understood of Charles' men, took the oath in that *Lingua Romana Rustica* which was one day to become 'French'; and Charles for a corresponding reason swore in a rude Teutonic speech which was the parent of 'German.' For, in truth, under all these partitions, struggles, oaths and deceptions, two nations were struggling to come to the birth. They could not yet be born because over them both hung the Imperial idea of unity, and between their respective centres lay a large strip of territory where both languages were spoken.

After the oath the two brothers moved down the Rhine with the intention of dividing the Empire between themselves, or at least of confining Lothair to Italy. It was perhaps then that for the first time they realised how great the ravages of the Northmen, of which we shall soon have to speak, had already been. The nominally Christian 'king' Harold of Denmark had fought upon Lothair's side at Fontenay and had been loaded with favours, which of course only tempted other non-Christian Danes to make fresh descents on the northern coasts. Any long continuance of civil war would probably be merely to the profit of these robbers, whom Lothair would not scruple to call to his aid. Perhaps it was this reflection which led to a meeting of all three brothers near Macon and to the

Treaty of Verdun of August 843, which made a new and triple partition of the whole Empire into three hereditary strips. Lothair was to keep the title of emperor, and to rule Italy and a narrow piece of territory from the Alps to the North Sea. All east of this was to go to Louis, all west of it to Charles. The eastern boundary of 'Lotharingia' (hence comes the later Duchy of 'Lorraine') was to be the Alps from the head of the Adriatic to the Aar, down the Aar to the Rhine, down the Rhine[1] to its last westward turn, and then into the North Sea near the mouth of the Ems. Its westward boundary was roughly speaking Rhone, Saône, Meuse, Scheldt. Though perhaps intended to follow the diocesan and county lines, it did not do so neatly, for many great bishoprics had lands in each division. And it left a terrible bone of contention between the future France and the future Germany.

Lothair's capitals then are at Aachen, Pavia and Rome, and his activity for the remainder of his life lies between them. Louis rules at Regensburg, or at Frankfort, or at Mainz, Charles at Laon or at Paris. They are far from considering that they have made three separate kingdoms; nay, they agree to have frequent meetings for the 'common working of the Empire.' They are all Franks, and all 'live Frankish law'; they all still believe themselves to administer the county system of Charlemagne. All are exposed to the common danger from the Northmen; Lothair in Italy is specially opposed also to the danger from the Saracens. Let us consider for a few minutes what this last danger was, and we shall in time be able to trace a close parallel between it and the danger from the Northmen.

The Saracens who raided Italy and occupied Sicily in

[1] But to Louis were to be given the three great cities on the left bank of the Rhine, Mainz, Worms, and Speyer, *propter vini copiam.* Apparently there was no viticulture as yet east of Rhine, but Rhine-wine was already famous. According to the beautiful legend told in W. Hauff's *Phantasien*, Charlemagne brought the cuttings from the hot soil of Spain and planted them round Ingelheim; the cool soil of the Rhine tempered their fiery juices into the liquid sunshine which Germans drink and sing of to-day.

the ninth century were not a manifestation of any national or religious forward-movement of Islam, such as the conquest of Spain had been. That forward-movement was now somewhat exhausted, and Islam was engaged in bitter civil wars. Rather they were the 'young bloods' and roving spirits, driven out from the settled Arab and Berber communities in Spain and Africa,[1] perhaps from the Levant also. The tenth-century Bishop Liutprand, with his ridiculous classical affectation, is quite ready to call them *Pœni*. In short they were professional pirates, coming for plunder and slaves, but ready also to settle and make new homes for themselves. A rebel Greek in Sicily seems to have called in some of these to help him to overthrow an exarch, who still governed that island for the Eastern Empire (827) They took Girgenti, and after a year's siege, Palermo (831). Before 840 they had mastered most of the island except Syracuse, which held out till 878. Long before that they had systematically begun to raid Southern Italy. A disputed succession to the Duchy of Benevento first invited their attention thither; each claimant called them in and they fought it out, Spanish Saracens for one, Africans for the other duke. They beat a Byzantino-Venetian fleet in 840, and took Bari in the next year. The popes were quite awake to the danger; Gregory IV. built 'New Ostia' at Tiber-mouth as a defence, as early as 828. Naples, always an unabashed community, sent its soldiers to help the Saracens to take Messina (843). Sergius II., who succeeded Gregory in 844, quarrelled badly with Lothair, though he agreed to crown Lothair's son ('Louis II.') as King of Italy; and the result was the great raid of 846, when the pirates sailed up the Tiber, sacked and burned everything outside the walls of Aurelian. These excluded, we must remember, the whole Vatican quarter with the holiest of all churches, St. Peter's, and also the suburb of Saint-Paul-without-the-Walls. The Vatican quarter held the 'School of the Saxons,' who fought bravely and were slain in heaps. The *Campagna* was pillaged as in the days of the Goths, and

[1] Again notice Carthage as the home of pirates; *vide supra*, p. 78.

only the great walls saved the city itself. At last, after a failure at relief by Louis II., a Margrave of Spoleto appeared with some sort of troops and chased away the pirates. The writer in the *Liber Pontificalis* saw in this disaster a chastisement for the sins of Pope Sergius, who was a wicked man.

It was the terror of these days which led the next pope, Leo IV. (847-55), to repair the whole circuit of the old walls, and to enclose within a new wall the Vatican suburb, henceforth called 'Civitas Leonina.' Lothair and Louis II. urged him on, and raised subscriptions from all Western Christendom to help him. Then the pope organised a great league of the Southern cities and princes, even including Naples, collected a fleet, promised Paradise to all who should fall in battle against the infidels, and went himself to Tiber-mouth to bless the expedition. Either a storm or a victory of this fleet overpowered the pirates, and the good pope had the pleasure of seeing Saracen captives carrying stones and hods for his new wall. He also rebuilt Portus and peopled it with fugitive Corsicans. But neither Portus nor New Ostia held out long; Centumcellæ was also burned, and rebuilt at the beginning of the next age as 'Civita Vecchia.' Evidently Central Italy had little rest from Saracens till far into the tenth century. The south was even worse off. From Bari, till its recapture in 869, they raided all Apulia, from Taranto all the instep and toe of the peninsula. Lothair was getting old; Louis II. did his valiantest, but had no fleet to cope with the pirates. The Greeks, to whom these parts nominally belonged, had little will to help a Frank who, if victorious, would probably annex their territory; Constantinople and Venice both had fleets, but each had much trade with Mahometan countries, and did not want to provoke Islam to a *Jehad* which would upset this trade. It was in 828 that the Venetian traders had smuggled the body of St Mark, disguised as a bale of goods, out of Alexandria.[1] Venice,

[1] Body-snatching, in order to set up in a city a patron saint of really first-class power, was a regular profession at this date. The body of an Evangelist was, of course, worth many provinces.

safe in her lagunes feared no pirates either by land or sea; she was now the regular port of embarkation for the East.[1]

I have said that a close parallel might be made out between the Saracen raids in the Mediterranean, and those of the Northmen, to whom we must now turn, on the coast of the North Sea and the Channel. These also were, as a rule, the young bloods of Denmark and perhaps a few from Norway, men outlawed for their turbulence, who freighted a ship and took to piracy. Like the Saracens, they came at first for mere booty, and especially for slaves—Irish 'thralls' crop up in many Sagas. Also they came to steal arms and armour, although they already knew how to make these better than the Franks themselves. Like the Saracens, they were quite ready to trade, if the place of their land-fall were too well defended to be harried. And, like them, they ended by settling on many of the coasts they had harried.

But one must not press the parallel too far. The Northmen were, for the moment, infinitely more dreadful enemies to Christendom than the Saracens, and they were so just because they had developed, without any Roman influence at all, a civilisation which was capable of beating in the field that which the Franks had inherited from Rome. They failed to make a full end of Franco-Roman civilisation, partly because their warriors were so few in number, their reserve of population so small, their attacks made on such various and distant points at the same time; but, far more, because they were so quick to adapt themselves to the better elements of that civilisation, after they had apparently beaten it to its knees. Their heathenism seems to have been by no means so stubborn as that of Charlemagne's Saxons; if there is no other way out of an awkward place a body of

[1] It is interesting to see that Bishop Liutprand in 949 took only three weeks to make the journey from Venice to Constantinople; this was a great improvement on the slow voyages of the seventh century. His journey from Pavia to Venice, most of it in a boat on the Po, was performed in three days.

Northmen is usually ready to accept baptism,[1] and almost always ready to accept a good settlement with leave to trade. So King Canute in 1017 chose to govern his 'Scandinavian Empire' from Winchester rather than from Roeskilde or Trondhjem; so Rollo wisely chose to become a civilised French Duke and to live at Rouen (913). Of the origin of the strange and picturesque yet simple civilisation of the Northmen we know nothing at all. Learned men have sought in vain to connect the nature-worship of the Norse *Edda* with Greek mythology modified by Christian influence. The best light on old Norse life may be gained by reading the Sagas, especially those collected in *Origines Islandicæ*.[2] No remains of antiquity, nothing of the Dark Ages or the Middle Ages, give such an insight into the everyday life of a primitive people as these stories give. But the Sagas are of little value for the history of the Viking invasions in France and Germany, and they were nearly all rehandled by Snorri Sturluson in Iceland in the thirteenth century; also they refer more especially to the Norwegian than to the Danish voyages and fightings. And, as there is no Danish historian before Saxo Grammaticus, who died at the beginning of the thirteenth century, it is mainly on the chronicles written by those who suffered from the Vikings that we have to depend. Saxo, indeed, knows that his people raided (and he says conquered) most of Europe, but then he thinks that it happened many centuries earlier than the ninth; he has no idea that the Normans of his day are of Viking origin.

It was the missionaries from Ireland and Iona who first came in contact with the Vikings, perhaps in the Faroe or Shetland Isles. In the middle of the eighth century if not earlier, the fjords of Norway and Denmark began to pour out a stream of clever and hardy sailors, half pirates, half

[1] Instances have been quoted in which these heathens 'try the gods all round,' including the God of the Christians, in order to win success in battle. No doubt many Christian renegades and outlaws took service with them.

[2] By Gudbrand Vigfusson and F. York Powell, 2 vols., Oxford, 1905.

traders, wholly explorers, in well-found vessels, more capable than anything then afloat of long voyages on a very boisterous ocean, but also of light draft and handy for rowing up creeks and rivers. Their arms were the long-handled axe, the sword, and the bow, their only defence at first the tall pointed shield covering the whole body. Very soon they learned to make ringmail superior to anything in Central Europe. To make a strong camp at their landing-place and leave a guard over their ships, while the main body raided far inland on stolen horses, was the first principle of a Viking raid. They killed Christian priests and monks, and burned Christian churches, quite as much because they feared the priests' 'magic,' as to get the gold and silver that was stored in the churches. They were exceedingly skilful at stratagem, surprise, and defence behind hastily built walls of earth and wood. Soon they had learned and improved on all the Roman siege-craft that survived in Northern Europe. We are astonished to find, in the account of the great siege of Paris (885-6), the same machines of attack and defence (and these directly of Roman descent) employed by both sides. A ship's crew would perhaps contain as many as fifty Vikings; eighty was a very large crew. On great occasions, as in the last attacks on Wessex in the reign of Alfred, and again in the reign of Ethelred II., and at the siege of Paris in 886, very large armies would gather to the fray; but it is probable that they gathered gradually, and that they obeyed no one leader continuously. Each 'king' or *jarl* (earl) would have his own following, and all the great commanders would be deemed equals, though no doubt one tried Viking might be elected to the command of all for a time. We read in the Sagas of three classes of free warriors, kings, *jarls*, and *holds*; the latter probably being the 'peasant aristocracy' of landowners.[1] Between *jarls* and kings it is not easy to see much distinction, except that

[1] *Bondi* is also a free peasant landowner, though of lower rank and less *wergild* than *hold*; we do not hear much of *bondir* in the fighting line.

when a sea-king dies he is placed in full armour on a pyre on the deck of his own ship, which is then burned on the waves which he has ruled. By the head of Sleipnir! that was a royal way of going to one's gods.

Anything like certain dates for the commencement of the Viking impact are impossible, but it clearly began by falling upon the British Islands; the occupation of the Orkneys would be the first step to the conquest of Britain. Before the eighth century was out the pirates had landed on the coasts both of Northumbria and Wessex, had seized Rathlin Isle at the north-east corner of Ireland, and probably several of the Hebrides. Early in the ninth century the monastery of Iona had gone up in flames. Probably this and all the subsequent Irish, Scottish, and Hebridean raids, and perhaps not a few of those on Northern England were begun rather by Norwegians than by Danes from Denmark, whereas those on the Continent were almost wholly Danish in origin; yet oddly enough the name 'Danes' is always used by the English chroniclers and that of Northmen ('Nordmanni') by the Frankish. Perhaps it is a mere question of names; the warriors of each nation would fraternise with each other. Rollo, the founder of Normandy, is claimed by the Icelandic Saga-writer as a Norwegian, by the French chroniclers he is believed to be a Dane of royal Danish blood.

Roughly speaking, we may distinguish two epochs of the attack on the Frankish Empire, the first from about 835-66, the second from about 878 onwards; during the interval the largest armies of the Northmen were busy in England. And, again roughly speaking, the attack on the Frank Empire, 'Valland' as the Sagas call it, was a quadruple one. First, there was always a temptation to a land-faring 'king' of Denmark to come out of his Jutish peninsula, harry Saxony up to the Rhine, and send a fleet up the Elbe at the same time; he might be a Christian, as was that Harold who helped Lothair at Fontenay, but that would not wholly check his hostility. Secondly, there would be a land-fall on the coasts of 'Frisia' (*i.e.*, modern Holland) by the river Ems and by the numerous branches

of the Rhine and Scheldt, with some island like Walcheren for the Vikings' base. Thirdly, there was the entry by the broad valley of the Seine—and the attacks there never ceased till Normandy was a Scandinavian province. Lastly, for the more adventurous, there was the Loire, with the Isle of Noirmoutier for a base; and he must have been an exceedingly skilful navigator who first rowed up through the shifting sandbanks of that great artery of France. It was quite conceivable that a combination of attacks by all three rivers, Rhine, Seine, and Loire, might take place. Still further afield, though less likely to combine with the northern raiders, were pirates who sailed up the Garonne as far as Toulouse, and even the Rhone (where, perhaps, they may have run athwart Spanish Saracens, who sacked Marseilles in 838, Arles in 842), and plundered the coasts of Italy.[1] They attacked Spain and burned Seville itself in 845.

It was in 841 that the two great abbeys on the Seine, Jumièges and Saint-Wandrille, were first burned, and Rouen first sacked; obviously the civil war let the pirates in easily. In 843 it was the turn of Nantes at Loire-mouth. In 845 the pirates were everywhere, though the Saxons fought valiantly against them on the Elbe. The son and brothers of the late Danish 'king' Harold relapsed to heathenism, and devastated all Frisia up to the Waal; Frisia had been a flourishing country under Charles the Great, and it hardly recovered from these raids before the thirteenth century. Ragnar Lodbrog ('Reginald with the shaggy breeches') sacked Paris in 845, as well as Toulouse, Bordeaux, Nantes (for the second time), and Tours. Perhaps it was upon this occasion that the body of the blessed St Martin had to be removed to Auxerre, where it subsequently performed a wondrous miracle.[2] Soon

[1] Hasting the Dane sacked Pisa in 860.

[2] A later edition of the *Liber Pontificalis* records, under the reign of Pope Stephen V., at the end of the ninth century, that while St Martin was lying for safety's sake beside St Germain at Auxerre, whither some of the Tours monks had accompanied him, certain jealousies and even lawsuits arose between these monks and their hosts (who worshipped, of course, their own local saint, Germain)

afterwards another detachment burned Ghent, Utrecht, Antwerp, Nymwegen, Courtrai (851). Between that year and 853 we may perhaps date the beginnings of the actual settlement of Northmen in the valley of the lower Seine, and we shortly hear of them sailing up the Marne, sacking Paris for the second time (856), and then Orleans and Meaux.

Of the three royal Caroling brothers who were confronted with this frightful state of things, Louis the German, on the whole, did best and Charles the Bald worst. Lothair, during the twelve years which he lived after the partition of Verdun, was, of course, much distracted by the Saracen attacks on his Italy, though he seems to have left his son, Louis II. (co-emperor, 850), to do the fighting. He had also a long quarrel with his brother Charles, because he wished to get his old friend Ebbo reinstated in the Archbishopric of Rheims, while Charles supported the new candidate, Hincmar, who definitely got the see in 845. The results of this quarrel dragged on for nearly twenty years, because Hincmar refused to recognise the bishops who had been ordained by Ebbo. Hincmar was in many ways a very fine fellow, and a stout anti-papal nationalist; but laymen must always feel regret when the strength of a Christian country, which is at death-grips with two sets of heathen foes, is frittered away in clerical disputes. Lothair and Charles were both too much inclined to buy the pirates off with 'Danegeld,' or with permission to go and plunder 'somewhere else'; but Lothair at least laboured steadily at the task of converting them. It is illustrative of the age that he once wrote to

about the offerings that were laid on the two tombs. Each set claimed these offerings, and each attributed the daily miracles performed to its own saint. So, in order to settle the matter, they took a live leper and put him to sleep for a night between the two dead saints. In the morning the half of his body which was next St Martin was healed of its leprosy. Next night they turned him round the other way, and again St Martin's half was healed. But, so far as St Germain was concerned, this was 'not on account of any weakness (*impotentia*) on his part, but because he wished to give honour to his guest.'—*Lib. Pontif.*, edn. Duchesne II., 226.

Leo IV. to send him some good bones of martyrs, which would work real miracles and so convince the Danes of the truth of the Christian faith. Lothair died in 855, leaving the County of Provence to his youngest son Charles, the rest of his kingdom north of the Alps to his second son Lothair II., and Italy to his eldest and best son Louis II., now sole emperor. This man's activity lay wholly in Italy whither we must now follow him, leaving his uncles, Charles the Bald and Louis the German, to deal with their respective pirates as best they may.

Leo IV. died in the same year as Lothair, and it is not true that his successor was Pope Joan, a learned Englishwoman dressed as a man. Her legend was inserted, in the thirteenth century, into an older Roman chronicle by some humorist who wished to spite one of the great popes of that date. In reality Benedict III. reigned between Leo and one of the greatest (in the papal sense) of all popes, Nicholas I. (858-67). This man was the candidate of the Emperor Louis II., who soon had reason to repent of his choice. Nicholas was indeed altogether a child of another age. His spiritual arrogance recalls that of Gregory I. and foreshadows that of Gregory VII., without showing a trace of the humanity or the wisdom in administration of the former of these bishops. Not Greek fleets, not Frankish or Lombard armies were his weapons, but the thunders of the lesser and greater anathema. And, just at the right time, there appeared for his use the amazing armoury of the 'False Decretals.'

They appeared in France, where the court of Charles the Bald, migratory in the face of the assaults of the Northmen as it must often have been, was yet the centre of European culture and also of active theological disputation. Charles himself was a great lover of learning and a collector of manuscripts. One remembers kindly the shelter he gave to the most daring thinker of the Dark Ages, John Scot Erigena, a Greek scholar, who, like others before and after him, tried to reconcile Christian theology with Platonism, or at least with Neo-Platonism. No wonder Pope Nicholas objected to such a man and

demanded his expulsion from France and Christendom. Even for Hincmar John Scot was too much and had to retire, if William of Malmesbury may be believed, to England at last. Now the dispute over the See of Rheims, which I lately mentioned, led to some desire being expressed for an authoritative collection of Church law which should delimit the respective powers of popes, archbishops, and bishops; and, about the year 847, such a collection was begun, at the request of the See of Mainz, by a certain Benedict Levita. Benedict drew largely on seventh-century Spanish sources, some of which had the genuine authority of the great Bishop Isidore of Seville, while some were forgeries long in use; Benedict also added some forgeries of his own. On this collection an unknown forger very greatly improved by writing, about the year 850-55, entirely out of his own head, a series of some ninety letters, which he attributed to the earliest bishops of Rome from St Clement to Damasus. With some skill he 'covered up his tracks' by introducing among these (1) the Epistle of Clement, which the Church has always believed to be a genuine document of the first century; (2) sentences unquestionably out of the works of the real Bishop Isidore of Seville; (3) perfectly genuine papal letters and acts of councils from the days of Pope Damasus to those of Gregory II.

The whole collection is a shameless attempt to exalt the See of St Peter at the expense of the other Metropolitan sees, to declare that bishops can only be judged by synods sanctioned by the Bishop of Rome, and that even from such synods they can appeal directly to the pope. The author probably intended his work to be only a *livre de circonstance* directed against Hincmar; he little dreamed that his forgeries, even after the attempt to defend their authenticity had been given up, were to be the chosen armoury of the Roman churchmen in all subsequent ages. Their authenticity could hardly have gone unsuspected at the time. Hincmar himself, though he did not scruple to invoke the authority of the Decretals against laymen who had seized Church lands, declared

that their rulings against archbishops in favour of the bishops (whom he quietly went on deposing) were not good law.[1] And he openly told Pope Hadrian II. that Gregory IV. and all his successors had been seeking to stir up trouble in the Empire and to dispose of its crowns, 'which it was not the business of *one bishop* to do.' Anyone, indeed, who knew any Roman history ought to have been able to trip up the forger, for not only does his list of popes differ from that of the *Liber Pontificalis* (the list then universally accepted by the Church), but he makes his first- and second-century popes preside in judgment and override the decrees of Imperial Rome, when in reality they were conducting with infinite skill, devotion, and secrecy, the affairs of the infant Church under the disguise of a burial club. He makes them solve, in the atrocious Latin of the ninth century (for which alone they would probably have excommunicated him), all the burning questions of his own day.

But to the hands of Nicholas I. no weapon could have been more opportune. It was also not fortuitous that, in the reign of the same pope, John the Deacon wrote the life of Gregory the Great. The wine was red, the cup was full-mixed, and Nicholas and his successors scrupled not to pour out of the same. With the Decretals in his hand, Nicholas beat down the last attempt of Ravenna to claim some shade of independence; he drove its archbishop to Pavia, and then compelled him to crawl back and sue for pardon. He excommunicated two of the most powerful German Metropolitans (Cologne and Trier), who, in common with all the clergy of Lotharingia, had supported a doubtful marriage of their temporal lord, Lothair II., the emperor's brother; he excommunicated that brother himself and made his life that of a hunted animal; he applied the whole doctrine of the False Decretals to the solution of a question between two patriarchs of Constantinople, in which his mediation had been unwisely asked. This resulted in the excommunication of the one really learned and independent Eastern

[1] See Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, cxxvi., 290 *sqq.*

churchman of the age, Photius,[1] whose 'Library' has preserved for us so many fragments of otherwise unknown ancient writers. In connection with this matter it is interesting to see that Nicholas ignored everything that had happened since the fourth century; especially he ignored the very existence of Islam. 'What,' he asked, 'have you been doing at Constantinople to ignore St Peter's rights for so long? Why do not the patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria obey me? Why do you not hand back my Sicilian farms? . . . as for you Photius, St Peter and St Paul, Almighty God, the six general Councils, all the Saints and the Holy Ghost alike condemn you.'

Against such a torrent of words one needed to be as far off as Rheims or Constantinople to hold up one's head at all. Louis II. made some attempt to interfere on behalf of his brother Lothair, and actually marched troops into Rome; but the pope went and knelt fasting for two days on end at the Apostles' tomb, until, terrified by such holiness, Louis withdrew his army. Hincmar answered each burst of thunder in very long letters, which may be read in Flodoard's *History of Rheims*, and on the whole just managed to brave it out for the nine dreadful years of Nicholas' reign. Photius did not scruple to call a council (in answer to one which obeyed the pope's summons to Rome), and to counter-excommunicate Nicholas; but an unlucky palace revolution at Constantinople did what Nicholas could not do, namely, deprived him of his patriarchate in the very year of his enemy's death. It is needless to say that Saracens in Italy were of little account to a pope who, like themselves, was engaged in the congenial task of making Christendom tremble. Louis II. was left to continue his dogged efforts to get rid of the common enemy entirely unaided by Nicholas; he even patched up an alliance with the Greeks, got the help of a Greek fleet and retook Bari, which the

[1] To the churchmen, both of East and West, Photius was an impious wretch who said that earthquakes were not the manifestation of divine wrath, but to be attributed to natural causes. Clearly, like Gerbert a century later, he was instructed by demons.

Saracens had held for twenty-eight years (869). He could not, however, prevent the legates of the next pope (Hadrian II., 867-72) from being captured, on their return from some excommunicatory business in the East, by Slavonic pirates who had made themselves a comfortable eyrie on the Dalmatian coast; Hadrian, with extreme want of good feeling, scolded poor Louis for this mishap. Worse still, Louis was actually taken prisoner himself by a Duke of Benevento and then contemptuously released. He died in 875, a vigorous, hard-fighting great-grandson of Charlemagne, of whom one would gladly have known more. His loving uncles Charles the Bald and Louis the German, at once proposed to divide his territory and to claim his Imperial crown.

These uncles had not always got on well together. It would no doubt be fanciful to trace in the temperaments of the two men the respective characters of the nationalities that were coming into being under their rule; but there was a dogged German persistence in Louis which was wanting in Charles. Charles was quick to take up, and as quick to drop new enterprises; too ready to promise and too forgetful to fulfil. But Louis was far more master of his own dominions than Charles was of his; feudal disintegration had not proceeded nearly so far in Germany as in France. As regards interference with each other's territory, and the game of grab at that 'Lotharingia' which lay between them, there was not much to choose between the brothers.

Charles, however, we must remember had the more difficult task on his frontiers. Aquitaine, with its dependency Gascony, was in wild rebellion throughout most of his reign, and Aquitaine and Gascony then roughly meant all between the Loire, the Cevennes, the Western Pyrenees and Septimania; the basis of its race and civilisation was probably more Iberian than Gallic. Septimania stretched along the Mediterranean from the Rhone to the Eastern Pyrenees and bordered with the Spanish March, now oftener called the County of Barcelona. The sons of the deceased Pippin held on to Aquitaine as long as they

could, and Charles had constant wars with them; moreover, the north-eastern boundaries of Aquitaine were quite uncertain. As for Septimania and Barcelona Charles very rashly put to death his mother's old friend Count Bernard in 844, and Bernard's sons, not unnaturally, joined the Moslem. It is of no use to scold Charles for not helping Spanish Christians, for rebellious Aquitaine, Septimania, and Barcelona lay between him and them. But the result was that the March-land was as good as lost; Barcelona itself, the hard won conquest of Charles' father's youth, was retaken by an Emir in 852 and held for some years. Another Emir called Musa, believed to be a renegade of pure Gothic descent, raided over the Pyrenees far into Aquitaine. Only the long reign of the valiant Alfonso III. (866-910) in the Asturias Mountains began to redress the balance again in favour of the Cross.

Brittany also gave Charles infinite trouble, and a Breton duke called Nomenöe ended by becoming a crowned and anointed king. When the French bishops objected to crown him, he calmly broke off the Breton Church from its metropolitan of Tours and set up an archbishopric of his own at Dol[1] (845-9). He pushed his arms far into France, and Charles was at last glad to conclude a treaty with his successor which left to Brittany the counties of Nantes and Rennes, *i.e.*, virtually its limits of to-day. A century later Brittany entered on its long frontier-contest with the Norman dukes.

Both the Breton and the Aquitanian trouble, perhaps even the invasions of the Northmen might have been successfully dealt with if Charles could have relied on his own *fideles*. The latter name, by this time generally in use, was a mere mockery: the French nobles lived by showing unfaith to the Crown. In 858, when Charles had got together a good army to tackle the Northmen, they simply deserted him in the field, talked about 'tyranny,' and called in his brother Louis, who came willingly enough, penetrated into Champagne and even dated

[1] This never obtained papal sanction; Tours had regained its rights by the twelfth century.

some grants as 'King of the West Franks.' It was Hincmar who upon this, as upon a later occasion (875), conjured him back again. Hincmar may indeed be claimed as a very early 'French' patriot; he was prepared to school his king a good deal in ecclesiastical matters, but he tried to prevent others from bullying him. If we may believe Flodoard's *History of Rheims* (iii., 18), it was Hincmar who was able to deliver the king's soul, after his death, out of what a later generation would have called purgatory.

It was not intelligence that failed Charles, it was strength of will to enforce obedience to his intelligent plans. In his later years he began to do somewhat better against the Danes. He was one of the first persons to perceive that a few mailed horsemen were worth more than large numbers of ill-armed infantry, and so he set himself to increase his cavalry. Once (861) he cut off a very large detachment of pirates in the Marne, by besetting the lower fords of the river; but then he gave them their lives on condition of their quitting France, which for a year or two this band actually did. In 860 he committed the defence of the whole Loire valley to Count Robert the Strong, ancestor of the Third Race of French kings, and Robert really set things in better order till he was killed in battle in 866. From about this time till 878 there was certainly a lull in France, while the pirates were concentrating their strength against Wessex; and Charles took the opportunity to begin a system of fortifications at the bridges and fords of the Seine system. He repaired the Roman walls of Paris, and these walls stood the city in good stead in 886. He captured a large body of pirates at Angers in 873. But he had the greatest difficulty in getting soldiers to man his forts. His great feudatories grew more and more unruly, and were yet not independent enough—as they were to be a hundred years later—to defend their own territories without royal help. One of them, Baldwin with the Iron Arm, first (?) Count of Flanders[1] (died 879), shocked the

[1] He was the founder of the city of Bruges, whose growing wealth

feelings of all good churchmen by running away with Charles' daughter Judith, widow of Ethelwulf of Wessex and stepmother of Alfred the Great; Judith had shocked people even more by marrying, between Ethelwulf and Baldwin, one of her own stepsons, and had been obliged to fly from England in consequence.

Meanwhile Louis the German, whom Flodoard always calls *Transrhenanus*[1] a man, like his half-brother, of considerable culture, who had been the pupil of Raban Maur, was bravely defending his eastern and northern frontiers, not without success. Ever since 833 he had called himself 'King of the East Franks,' and had based his power on the great Duchy of Bavaria. There was no real racial distinction between Bavaria and Swabia (or 'Alamannia') which lies westward of it, and not much between these and their northern neighbour Franconia. All were governed on the Frankish system of counts, ruling in *gaue*, and Louis was able to keep a fairly tight hand on his counts. Saxony was racially more distinct and more inclined to rebel, and Louis had once to apply very drastic methods to it; but he was successful in them, and, what is more wonderful, he was successful in keeping his own three sons from quarrelling. And, in the forty-three years[2] of his rule, he beat off Northmen, Serbs, Moravians, and Bohemians, pushed the Bavarian frontier steadily down the Danube, and succeeded, as we shall now see, in getting the best part of Lotharingia annexed to Germany.

That great province came into the market when Lothair II., excommunicated but still kicking against ecclesiastical censures, died in 869. His matrimonial

was to turn the fishermen and pirates of the Flemish estuaries into the most civilised community of Northern Europe in the later Middle Ages.

[1] An illustration of the idea that there was as yet no 'France' may be seen in the fact that Flodoard, writing at Rheims, always uses the expression *Transsequania* for everything west of the Seine.

[2] Fifty-nine if one were to date from the partition of 817, but Louis was then a child of eight; it is not till about 833 that he really begins to be active in Germany.

troubles had filled Frankish history for years past; and they had been of deep interest both to Louis and Charles the Bald, for by the wife whom the pope supported this Lothair had no children, by the wife whom the Lotharingian clergy supported he had several. The interests then of the rulers of France and Germany led them to take the papal view of the matter. Even before he died, they had made a provisional treaty to divide his dominions between them on his death; and when that happened, Charles was first in the field, made a grab at the whole of Lotharingia, and got Hincmar to come and crown him at Metz. In that region, which was afterwards 'Upper' Lorraine, he was well received especially by the clergy; but when he moved to Aachen he got no greeting at all; the ecclesiastics of 'Lower' Lorraine had no mind to be schooled by Hincmar. It needed only that Louis the German should threaten instant and bloody war to make Charles retreat from his aggression. A treaty at Mersen (870) between the brothers is far more of a landmark in the gradual separation of France and Germany, than that of Verdun twenty-seven years before. Except for the fact that it gave part of modern Belgium and a small strip of modern Holland to France, the frontier established between them was not very much unlike that of to-day. Strassburg and Bâle are German; the Moselle, up to and including Metz, is German. Dauphiné, Franche Comté, and a good bit of modern Lorraine are French. Above all, the treaty fully expresses the German view of the Rhine; it is 'Deutschlands Strom, nicht Deutschlands Grenze' (Germany's river, not her boundary). Nothing was settled as yet concerning the kingdom of Italy or the Imperial crown; Louis II. was indeed childless, but he had still five years of stormy life before him. If seniority were to count for anything, the crown of Rome would have to go to the German branch of the Carolings, and this was evidently the wish of Louis II.; in 874 he actually invited Carloman, eldest son of his uncle Louis the German, to come into Italy, so as to be ready in the event of his own death.

The Lombard nobles and bishops, on the other hand, leaned rather to the French line. Pope John VIII. (872-882) took the matter in his own hands and, on the death of Louis II. (875), sent swiftly to Charles the Bald, 'Come and be crowned emperor.' Charles, with his usual impetuosity, had started even before the invitation reached him.

John was a pope much more of the type of Leo IV. than of Nicholas I. The Saracens and his Roman nobles, the latter now again beginning to be troublesome, were his main anxieties. The whole of the south was seething with anarchy, and two successive 'Dukes' of Naples—one of them being an archbishop as well as a duke!—invited Saracens to help them to maintain that anarchy. But if John, in calling in Charles, expected help against anarchy or Saracens, he was to be grievously disappointed. No one in France liked the new departure, least of all the churchmen of Hincmar's type; they saw that the crown was being offered as a mere papal gift, and Hincmar had taught them to think little of popes. The Germans liked it still less; Louis was really disappointed on his son's behalf, and he promptly crossed the Rhine and seized all of Lotharingia that Charles had got by the treaty of Mersen. Charles came to Italy, brought few troops, was crowned, ran away again; Carloman, supported by Berengar, Margrave of Friuli, had just invaded Italy. Old King Louis of Germany died (876); Charles now thought he might regain all Lotharingia for France. He, as a crowned Caroling Emperor, might have in Germany a few partisans of the old ideas of unity on his side; but most of Germany held firm for the sons of the late king, and Charles' army was shamefully beaten near Andernach. In 877 Charles again visited Italy, was covered with papal blessings but effected nothing. His failure there is a great event in history.

From it dates almost a century of anarchy in North as well as in South Italy; from it, the complete and final divergence of French and German interests; from it the final triumph of feudality over monarchy in France.

Before starting on his last expedition (he died on the return journey, 877) he had called together his *fideles* and practically recognised that the lands and offices of all counts were hereditary. This was the celebrated capitulary of Quiercy-sur-Oise, the legalisation of feudalism as a system of government and land tenure in the same hands.[1] Profound distrust of his own son, 'Louis II. of France' (Louis the Stammerer), to whom he was leaving the regency, breathes in every line of that capitulary. As for the pope, he might please himself with the thought that he, first of popes, had avowedly made the Imperial crown his gift; but then he had given it to the wrong man. He would have to fight the Saracens himself, and he bravely set out to do so. In 876 they had devastated the Roman *Campagna;* in 877 John got a fleet and beat them off Cape Circe. But he could not prevent them from building a great fortress on the Garigliano (Liris), from which eyrie they, for the next forty years, plundered the country far and wide. It was then that they burned Monte Cassino, as the Lombards had done three centuries before. John, indeed, walled in, after Leo's model, the suburb of St Paul's and called it Johnstown (Johannopolis).

To whom was he to give the crown, on whom was he to call for help, when Charles the Bald died? There were strong factions in Rome both for a Frenchman and a German; there were even Italian princes, several of whom, by female descent, had Caroling blood in their veins, and these began to think of one of themselves. Lambert, Margrave of Spoleto, led the way by seizing Rome and imprisoning John. John escaped, fled to France and tried, first, the new King Louis II. there; but he, poor fellow, could only get himself recognised as king by his own nobles when, on Hincmar's advice, he had pacified them by stripping the crown of nearly every estate and prerogative it had left. John then tried a certain Boso, Count or Duke of Provence, who had been an agent of Charles the Bald

[1] *Vide infra*, p. 378.

(his brother-in-law) in Italy. Boso saw the pope safely back to Italy, but no more; his modest wishes confined themselves to a crown of Provence or 'Burgundy,' with a bit of Lombardy thrown in if possible; and he did succeed in 879 in getting some sort of independent dominion between the Alps, the Saône, and the Jura. So at last John had to come to terms with the German line. He took Charles the Fat, the youngest of the three German brothers, made him King of Italy in 879, and Emperor in 881. The Fat man was to prove of no more use to Italy than the Bald man; and John died poisoned or assassinated—the first but by no means the last pope to die so—in 882.

Meanwhile Germany, which had, on the whole, been happy during the long reign of Louis the German,[1] was going to suffer much in the next few years, and France was to be no better off. It was not only in Italy that these critical years (877-81) saw a collapse of all government. The descendants of Charlemagne begin to die off with appalling rapidity, and they confuse the reader very much by the tiresome frequency with which they are called by the same name, and even the same number, in the kingships of France, Germany, and Italy. Thus we have hardly said good-bye to Louis II., Emperor and King of Italy (died 875), before we have to greet, and almost immediately lose, two other kings called Louis II.

(1) The first of these, called 'the Young,' is the son of Louis the German; he reigned in his allotted third of Germany and in Lotharingia from 876 till 882, and had to fight the Northmen, who, driven out of England, began a series of terrible assaults up the rivers Rhine and Seine. This Louis II. died in 882, his elder brother Carloman had died before him, and his younger brother Charles the Fat alone was left.

(2) The second of these is the son of Charles the Bald, and is commonly called 'the Stammerer'; he reigned in

[1] He, too, had unfortunately divided his territory at his death between his three sons, Carloman, Louis, and Charles the Fat, into the three shares of Bavaria, Saxony, and Swabia.

France as Louis II., if one could call it reigning (877-79), and left two growing boys, the elder of whom was at once crowned as Louis III.; he died in 882,[1] and his younger brother, Carloman, who had been crowned with him, died in 884. But Louis the Stammerer also left an infant, Charles, afterwards Charles the Simple, of whom we shall hear more hereafter.

In 882, therefore, Charles the Fat was apparently the coming man. He had been emperor for a year; he had just become king of a reunited Germany, and he was already on his third totally ineffectual visit to Italy when he was astonished to receive, on the death of Carloman, an invitation to come and be King of France also (885). That anyone should have invited a person who had so conspicuously failed to defend Germany from the Northmen, or Italy from the Saracens, to rule a third country, would be a matter for wonder, were it not evidently the last triumph of the Unitarian party, of those who thought that nothing had gone right since the Empire of Charles the Great had been divided in 817.

For the Fat King's failure was complete wherever he came. Burgundy or Provence, call it which you will, had become independent under Boso; that, indeed, did not much matter. Italy was in sheer anarchy, and Charles, on his several visits there, merely quarrelled with Markgraves instead of fighting Saracens. The Saracens on the Garigliano were in full career of plunder; others, perhaps from Spain, were hammering the coasts of the Riviera on both sides of the Alpine barrier. A series of weak and quarrelsome popes succeeded John VIII., who had, I think, done his best. But far more serious was the fresh impact of the Norse pirates on the coast of the North Sea and the Channel. They seem to have passed at their ease, not only by sea but also overland, from the Rhine and the Meuse to the Somme, the Seine, and the Loire, although in 881 the young King of France, Louis III., had given them one bad beating near Abbeville. But,

[1] Hincmar, the best prop of the French branch of the Royal House, died in the same year (882).

after his death next year, there was as good as no resistance. The body of St Remigius (St Remy), who had crowned Clovis, had to be carried away from its resting-place near Rheims for safety; the aged Hincmar had to fly and die at Épernay. Laon was taken, Rheims itself threatened; Liège, Cologne, Bonn, Trier, Mainz, and Worms were plundered; even Aachen fell, and the church of Charlemagne was desecrated. At Aschloh (Elsloo) on the Meuse, near the later city of Maastricht, the pirates built themselves a great fortress, like that of the Saracens on the Garigliano, and held it for several years as a centre for their raids. Charles the Fat advanced against it with a great army, but professed himself satisfied with a few baptisms of Danes, and then, to the great disgust of his own soldiers, retired without attacking (884).

Further west on the Seine, the Northmen had made another base for raids in the Isle of Oissel, ten miles above Rouen. Evidently the whole of the lower valley was in their hands, and their communications with the sea were open. They seized Pontoise in 885, and then, joined by fresh bands from the Loire, sat down to besiege Paris. The siege has become famous, not only because of its valiant defence, but because it was celebrated, in twelve hundred spirited and atrocious hexameters, by the monk Abbo of Saint-Germain, who was an eye-witness of it. I never believe the figures of mediæval chroniclers, and I do not believe Abbo when he says that 700 great ships, numerous smaller ones, and 40,000 men were collected at this siege; but we may well believe that there was a very great army of Northmen, that the whole Viking strength was for the time concentrated on the important exploit. The siege lasted eleven months, November 885 to October 886, and the defenders were Count Odo or Eudes (son of Robert the Strong) and Bishop Jocelyn. The walls then inclosed only 'the City,' *i.e.*, the island on which Notre Dame now stands, but there were suburbs on either bank, and recently fortified bridges to either bank. All the outworks were gradually taken, a flood washed away the more important bridge, the good bishop died; Frank armies

hovered near but dared not to attempt a rescue. Count Odo stole out in disguise, and sent frantic messages to King Charles the Fat who was in Italy. When at length Charles reached the heights of Montmartre, instead of falling upon the besiegers, who were now in a plight almost as bad as that of the besieged, he began to negotiate with them, and finally bought them off by promising them the plunder of Burgundy[1]—one of the few parts of the Frankish dominions as yet unwasted. It was the story of Aschloh over again, and his men of war were so angry that, in the next year (887), a German diet deposed the incapable king: he was already in a dying condition, died in 888, and left no children. The legitimate line of Charlemagne was now represented only by the boy Charles, ten years old, son of Louis the Stammerer. But the resistance of Paris had made a great impression, and Count Odo was the hero of the Continent. The Northmen (on their way to plunder Burgundy as *per* agreement) were beaten off from Sens; they began to realise that their strategy was ceasing to pay, and began to turn their thoughts rather to settlement on the Lower Seine.

This date of 887 is, therefore, an important landmark; for the last time in that year all Frankish kingdoms, except Burgundy, had been in the same hand, the hand that also held the sceptre of the Empire; from that year France and Germany each got kings of their own, and in France, for a moment, the king was not a Caroling by blood.

The leading spirit in the deposition of Charles the Fat had been Duke or Margrave Arnulf, a bastard grandson of Louis the German. He owed his fame to his brave fighting on the far south-eastern frontier against a Slavonic monster called Swatopluk, whose temporary kingdom, called the Moravian, stretched from the Theiss

[1] Not Boso's little growing kingdom, but the district where Burgundy wine is now grown, between the head-waters of the Seine and Saône; in fact, the later French 'Duchy' of Burgundy. *Vide infra*, notes on pp. 312, 336, 339.

in Hungary westward to Bohemia and Bavaria. It was characteristic of Charles the Fat that he actually ordered Arnulf to stop fighting, and received the horrible Slav as a vassal king. But now, on Charles' end, Arnulf, both as a *quasi*-Caroling and as a brave and successful soldier, was elected king by the German diet; while, at the same time, the French nobles elected Count Odo in preference to the boy Charles. Both were candidates of the laity as opposed to the bishops.

Arnulf, *qua* German King, did valiantly; in 891 he stormed a fortified camp of the Northmen on the river Dyle, near where Louvain now stands; it was the first time the invaders had been attacked and beaten in their entrenchments. He continued the war against the Moravians, and we can hardly blame him for calling in against them (if indeed he did call, which is doubtful) the advanced guard of a new set of savages, the Hungarians, of Turkish descent, who were on their way westwards across the plains of Dacia. But, as we shall see, the results of their coming were disastrous for all three portions of the Empire. As King of Germany we also find Arnulf holding a synod at Mainz and getting French and Italian bishops to come to it, as well as Germans and Lorrainers. He patronised the France of Odo, and patronised the two fragments into which, after the death of Boso in 887, the Burgundian kingdom had further broken up; the northern fragment, *i.e.*, the later Franche Comté, chose Count Rudolf of Auxerre; the southern, *i.e.*, the later Dauphiné and Provence, took Louis, son of Boso,[1] in 890. Arnulf also patronised Berengar, Margrave of Friuli, who was wrestling with Guy, Margrave of Spoleto, to be called King of Italy. But he had other and less fortunate activities. It was difficult even for a bastard Caroling to look upon himself as anything but a successor of Charlemagne, for the idea of unity was by no means

[1] These portions were united again in 930 (or 933) under a Rudolf II., and the 'Kingdom of Burgundy' or 'Arelat,' with a capital at the old Roman city of Arles, dragged on a precarious existence till the thirteenth century, oftener than not under German supremacy.

dead; and so Arnulf was now tempted to interfere in Italian politics and to claim the crown of Italy and the crown of the Empire as well. The death of his old enemy Swatopluk in 894 gave him rest on his Eastern frontiers, and therefore perhaps gave him some excuse for an Italian expedition.[1]

The papal history after the death of John VIII. is both futile and horrible, and we may avoid its details. There were two fierce parties in Rome, and the leading figure was a certain Bishop Formosus of Porto; he had been in trouble with two successive popes before he became pope himself. Guy of Spoleto was the most powerful layman on the spot, and, on the death of Charles the Fat, had managed to compel Pope Stephen V. to crown him emperor (891). Pope Formosus, probably also against his will, went further and crowned Guy's son Lambert as co-emperor, and so there seemed just a chance for a native Italian dynasty. But Guy died in 894, and Formosus, who was in great danger from ecclesiastical factions in Rome, began to send messages to Arnulf for help. Arnulf came, the first time (894) only to the north, sacked cruelly the city of Bergamo, and went back calling himself merely King of Italy. Two years later he came again, made a hasty dash on Rome, which was being held by young Lambert's Spoletan troops, won an entry by a single gate, snatched the Imperial crown from Formosus, and retreated north at once, leaving young Lambert really in possession of all Central Italy. Lambert was a fine fellow 'who,' says Liutprand, 'if swift death had not seized him (898), would have subdued the whole world to himself like a man.'

Formosus, luckily for himself, died and was buried in 896; but his successor, Stephen VI., who belonged to the opposing faction, dug him up, had him solemnly tried before a synod, and threw what remained of him into the Tiber. This episode has occasioned some difficulties to those who have wished to maintain that popes are always infallible. Liutprand, who as a rule

treats us to few miracles, says that he has 'often heard from the most religious persons in Rome' that, when the bones of Formosus were at last recovered and buried in St Peter's, the statues of the saints in that church saluted them as they passed to their rest.

Arnulf, meanwhile, went back to Germany a very sick, perhaps a dying man, and died in 899; his whole Italian policy had been a complete mistake. He had far better have made Lambert or Berengar his lieutenant in Italy; even if the peninsula had had to be left alone altogether, the very life of civilisation in the north and east depended on the presence of a war-like leader, such as Arnulf undoubtedly was. He left a son known as 'Louis the Child,' who kept a precarious hold on a tottering German throne till his death in 911.

In France, Odo had been far less successful as king (888-98) than he had been as Count and defender of Paris. The Northmen in the Seine valley by no means confined their efforts to settlement there; once Odo had to pay them a very heavy Danegeld, and his own family property (the County of Paris and large estates on either side of this from the Loire to Champagne) was perennially exposed to their ravages. Guy of Spoleto moreover had a fling for the French crown as well as the Imperial; and when he failed for himself he rallied the churchmen to the cause of young Charles the Simple. When Odo was dying childless he advised his brother Robert and all his friends to rally to the same side, and they accordingly crowned Charles in 898; Robert no doubt expected to rule in his stead, though Charles was not altogether the simpleton that his name implies.

During Charles' first year and that of Louis the Child, the Hungarians appeared and began a series of raids that lasted for over fifty years. It is possible, though not likely, that Arnulf was guilty of calling them into Italy to avenge his own ill luck on Berengar or the Spoletans. They were no doubt a branch of those Turkish Chazars of the Volga, with whom, three centuries

before, we saw Heraclius in alliance against the Persians. Liutprand and the Greek Imperial author Constantine Porphyrogenitus both speak of them as 'Turks.' They rushed into battle 'with a base and diabolical shout of "Hui! Hui!"' Like their Hunnish predecessors, they were horse-archers, each man sitting as if he were a piece of his own shaggy Cossack pony. When mailed knights met them in the field, as in 933 and 955, the Hungarians were usually defeated in spite of their enormous numbers, and their successes were evidently owing to the amazing swiftness of their marches. Walled towns (except Pavia, see above, p. 274) usually resisted them, but the destruction they wrought in the open country of France, Germany, and Italy was awful. It is to be noted that their main lines of ravage lay rather between those already covered by Saracens and Northmen, *i.e.*, from the Danube to the Garonne, northwards as far as Saxony, Orleans, and Tours, southwards not much beyond Rome. They never seem to have combined with Saracens or Northmen, nor did the three sets of brigands ever play consciously into each other's hands; but each made the task of driving out the others well nigh impossible. Matters were not improved for Italy by the fact that, in 888, certain new Saracens had seized a port on the Provençal shore at Fraxinetum (Garde-Frainet); they built a castle there, held it for near a century to come, and established a profitable system of brigandage on travellers going through the Alpine passes. Flodoard of Rheims is always telling us, till the year of his death (966), dismal tales of pilgrims, especially English ones, being murdered or robbed by these wretches. Northern Italian potentates were not much more scrupulous than Southern as to alliances with them; Hugh of Provence, of whom anon, after actually getting a Greek fleet equipped with Greek fire to come and help him to take Fraxinetum, took the bandits into his pay, and used them to stop his rival Berengar II. from coming through the Alps.

But this is anticipating our story. Berengar I., grandfather of this man, in his north-eastern Mark of Friuli

(if you look at the map you will see that Friuli guards the old 'jumping-off place,' which we knew in the days of the Goths and Lombards) faced the Hungarians manfully, but was badly beaten on the Brenta, and after that there was little to stop this human deluge. Both he and young Louis of Provence, son of Boso, were candidates for the Empire; and Louis actually managed to get crowned in 901. But four years later Berengar caught and blinded him; he lived, a nominal 'Emperor Louis III.,' till 928, while his rival held most of Northern Italy, ever with an eye towards Rome. He, Berengar, was a grandson of Louis the Pious in the female line, and, like his contemporaries Boso, Rudolf, and Guy of Spoleto, was descended in the male line from counts of the Caroling Empire, who had managed to swallow the counties of their neighbours and make office and lands alike hereditary. But he became distinctly the representative of Italian nationality.

As for the popes, who alone could give him the crown, from the death of Formosus in 896 to 904 inclusive, we count no less than ten persons in occupation of the Holy See, one at least of whom was strangled, while two more died in prison. Sergius III. got on a little better and managed to live for seven years (904-11). He owed his security to the fact that he had a strong party among the Roman nobles, who, being now freed from the fear of any emperor coming in from France or Germany, did after their kind. Both Sergius III. and John X. (914-28) —there are two nonentities between them—appear as the nominees of one Theophylactus and his wife Theodora. Of the origin of this family nothing is known; by their names only we can guess that they were of Greek descent. The man is at first called *Dux et Magister Militum* and, later, 'Consul and Senator of Rome.' The woman is constantly called *Senatrix*, and the title passes from her highly disreputable self to her still more disreputable daughters, Theodora and Marozia. Probably they were just Roman nobles of extra force and cunning with rich estates and strong peel-towers on the *Campagna*, and

perhaps (though we do not read of such) fortified houses within the city.[1] Anyhow they were not far from creating a dynasty of popes. Sergius III. was the lover of one of the younger ladies, Marozia, and by her the father of a later pope, John XI. And Marozia, besides numerous lovers, had three successive husbands, and managed to control and bestow the papacy for several years.

[1] I know no evidence for the existence before the eleventh century of any fortified house within Rome except the castle of St Angelo; but the analogy of the later centuries, and of other Italian cities, would lead one to believe that there were such as early as the beginning of the tenth.

ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER IX

The TIME covered is, roughly, the tenth century.

The most important EVENTS are—(1) The substitution of new dynasties in Germany in 918, and France in 987, in place of the Carolings. (2) The establishment of Normandy as a Christian province of France and the consequent cessation of Viking raids. (3) The cessation, after their defeat near Augsburg, of the Hungarian raids, and the conversion of Hungary at the end of the century into a Christian country. (4) The comparative immunity even of Italy from Saracen raids after the defeat of the Saracens on the Garigliano in 915. (5) The continuance of the eastward advance of Germany against the Slavs, some of whom accept Christianity at the end of the century. (6) The struggle between France and Germany for Lotharingia or Lorraine, ending in the victory of Germany, especially in Lower Lorraine. (7) The utter weakness and long vacancy of the Empire, until the elevation of the Saxon dynasty to it in 962. (8) The extreme corruption of the Papacy, which the Saxon Emperors attempt to rescue from itself. (9) The struggle of these Emperors against the Greeks for the hold on Southern Italy. (10) Above all, the growth of Feudalism as the coming force in France and Germany, and to a lesser extent in Italy.

The most important ACTORS in these struggles are as follows :—

(1) The Capetian family in France, headed by

Robert, the Strong,
marries a daughter of Louis the Pious,
dies 866.

ODO, the defender of Paris in 885-886, chosen King in 888, dies 898, when the crown went back to the Caroling, Charles the Simple.	ROBERT I., chosen King in 922, dies 923.
	Hugh, the Great, dies 956.
	HUGH CAPET, 987-996.
	ROBERT II., the Pious, 996-1031.

(2) The Saxon dynasty in Germany (Emperors after 962).

After CONRAD I. of Franconia, King of Germany, 911-918, came
HENRY I., The Fowler
Duke of Saxony,
King of Germany, 919-936.

- OTTO I., 936-973, Emperor 962.
  - Liudolf.
  - OTTO II., 973-983.
    - OTTO III., 983-1002.
- Bruno (Archbishop and Saint), dies 965.
- Henry, Duke of Bavaria, dies 955.
  - Henry, the Quarrelsome, dies 995.
    - HENRY II., 1002-1024. (Henry the Fowler is reckoned Henry I., though he was never Emperor.

(3) The last of the Carolings in France (none of these were ever Emperors).

CHARLES, THE SIMPLE
(for whose origin, see Table in Argument to Chapter VIII.),
King 898, deposed 922,
dies 929.

His deposition was followed by one year's reign of ROBERT I. (see Table 1), and then of RAOUL, 923-936, a distant connection of the Carolings.

Then in 936 was restored the Son of

Charles, the Simple,

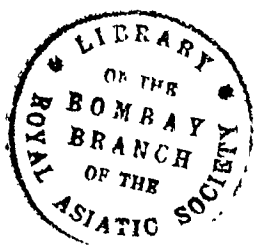
- LOUIS IV. (D'OUTREMER), dies 954.
  - LOTHAIR, dies 986.
    - LOUIS V., dies 987, the last of the Carolings.
  - Charles of Lorraine, struggled for the crown against Hugh Capet in vain.

(4) For the last of the Carolings in Germany, and their connections in Italy, some of whom are mentioned in this chapter, see Table in Argument to Chapter VIII.

(5) For the 'Burgundian' rulers, see Table in Argument to Chapter VIII.

(6) In the 'Eastern Empire' there is again a new dynasty, the so-called 'Macedonian' (really Armenian), beginning with

BASIL I.,
867-886.
|
LEO VI.,
886-911.
|
CONSTANTINE VII., who associates with himself a Cæsar, ROMANUS I.,
911-959. 919-944.
|
ROMANUS II., succeeded by his General, NICEPHORUS PHOCAS,
959-963. 963-969,
who again is succeeded
|
BASIL II., by another General,
the Bulgar-slayer, his own nephew,
976-1025. JOHN ZIMISCES,
969-976.



CHAPTER IX

THE SNAPPING OF THE BONDS

OMNIA terrena per vices sunt aliena,
Nunc mea, nunc hujus, post mortem nescio cujus.

AS we have now got to the beginning of the tenth century, I may perhaps be permitted to pause and say a word or two about the chroniclers who are to be our chief guides through it. With the exceptions of the *Liber Pontificalis*, of Eginhard's brief life of Charlemagne, Eginhard's own (?) rather unsatisfactory *Annals*, and the dreary *Four Books of Histories* by Count Nithard, grandson of Charlemagne and friend of Charles the Bald, we have been, since the death of Paul the Deacon, mainly dependent for contemporary evidence on the very impersonal monkish annalists such as Regino, Abbot of Prüm, the *Annals of the Monastery of Saint-Bertin*,[1] *Annals of Fulda*, or on Lives of Saints. But in the tenth century we have actually four extremely personal and interesting writers, who had seen and taken part in what they describe. By far the most remarkable of these is Liutprand, Bishop of Cremona. Perhaps he is one of the most remarkable authors of all ages. Unfortunately he is such a flibbertigibbet, skipping without warning from Germany to Italy, from Italy to Constantinople and back again, and he writes so obviously more for the pleasure of telling a good story than of recording the truth, that we can put little trust in what he says. Undoubtedly he has coloured all subsequent history. But he knew Greek, and, in order to

[1] The latter part of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, however, is largely the work, direct or indirect, of Archbishop Hincmar.

show his own learning, he uses it continually, translating it as he goes, and he quotes most of the classical Latin writers. He also knew everyone worth knowing, went twice on embassies to the Eastern Court, was present at the deposition of two popes (John XII., Benedict V.), at the election of one (Leo VIII.), and at the coronation of an emperor (Otto II. in the lifetime of Otto I.). One is sometimes tempted to think of him as a Roman rhetorician of the third century returned to earth, and taking an impious delight in making fun of the language and ideas of his new contemporaries. When Berengar I. is going to gouge out the eyes of his rival, Louis of Provence, Liutprand makes him work himself up into the necessary rage by quoting Cicero's apostrophe to Catiline—*Quousque tandem, etc.* Not content with calling the wife of Berengar II. 'Jezebel,' he must add 'Lamia.' *Spiritalis Pater* is good enough Latin in which to address a pope. The degenerate Greeks of Constantinople are often *Argi*. *Corpora sicque cadunt mutuis confossa sagittis* is a fair specimen of Liutprand's hexameters.

Yet he is very precious; and the more so because the real *Liber Pontificalis* stops at 891, though the gaps of the tenth and eleventh centuries are bridged with catalogues of popes; it is resumed at greater length in the twelfth century. Some of the ninth-century lives in the *Liber* are particularly large; but even these are often filled with accounts of new church furniture or of relic-collecting, to the exclusion of political events. The only other Italian witness in the tenth century is a sad monk called Benedict of Soracte, who enjoys the distinction of being the worst Latinist on record; he lived till the time of the Ottos.

North of the Alps we have a very careful monk of New Corbey, called Wittikind;[1] his *Res Gestæ Saxonicæ* are actually contemporary only from 936, but fairly trustworthy till they end in 973. He was an exceedingly patriotic Saxon and adored the Saxon Emperor Otto the Great. He makes very few mistakes, though it is odd that, with Bede in his hands, he should say that Britain is

[1] Whom it is now the fashion to call 'Widukind.'

now called Anglia because it is 'in an angle of the sea.'

Early in the tenth century there also begins to be contemporary one of the most trustworthy of all chronicles, the *Annals* of Canon Flodoard of Rheims, whose other work, *History of the Church of Rheims*, goes back to the foundation of the see. Flodoard, like Liutprand, was a man of affairs, had been to Rome in the days of Leo VII. (936-9), knew the Emperor Otto I., had been imprisoned for a year by a turbulent Count of Vermandois, had been a candidate for a bishopric, and died in 966. His chronicle is taken up by the fourth writer of our series, the monk Richer, also of Rheims, whose work was unknown before the third decade of the nineteenth century. Richer begins at 884 and carries on the story till 998. He is not nearly so accurate as Flodoard (where they can be checked against each other) and far more bombastic; he delights in inventing long speeches for his heroes. But he is interesting as being one of the few monks who knows anything of war—his father was a trusted soldier of Louis IV.—and of the weird siege-engines then in use. Also he was a professional doctor, and revels in the description of loathsome diseases. His account of his ride from Rheims to Chartres is the most vivid travel-story of the Dark Ages and has been often quoted; and he has one or two humorous touches, such as that of the destruction of a monastery at Blois ('the food was all eaten up, and so the monks ran away') which would have delighted Thomas Love Peacock. He also was well read in the classics, indeed he had been a pupil of the great Gerbert. Of Gerbert's own letters, which cover the last thirty years of the century, I shall have something to say later.

While, then, we may leave Berengar trying to be King of Italy and Emperor, we must turn back and follow the fortunes of France and Germany from the accessions of Charles the Simple and Louis the Child (898, 899). A most important event for the whole future history of Europe was the commencement of the definite settlement

of 'Normandy' as a French Province by the Norse pirate Rollo and his comrades. Rollo or Rolf had been driven perhaps from Denmark, perhaps from Norway, and could no longer take his booty home. Early in the tenth century he, after one of the best raids on record, including attempts both on Paris and Chartres, settled at Rouen[1] and consented to be baptised. The received story of a regular treaty between him and Charles the Simple at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in 913, is not known to Flodoard, but his baptism was about that date, and Duke Robert was his sponsor. The French bishops had probably been labouring for years at conversion of such of the *Normans* as had made themselves permanent homes on the Lower Seine; and the first known boundary of *Normandy* to the south certainly seems to have been the Epte, which joins the Seine from the east near Vernon; what, if any, western boundary was fixed does not appear. But peace was not immediately secured by Rollo's baptism; as late as 923 some more pirates came across from the Loire and settled down in the county of Bayeux and in parts of Maine. Some of this territory was then granted to them by Hugh 'the Great,' the son of Robert, the first of his race to be called 'Duke of France.' The Cotentin was not added until at least ten years later—say 933; and, with that gift, 'Normandy' was fairly complete.

For several years after this the newcomers kept their swords from rust by grabbing at the frontier of Brittany, but by the middle of the tenth century the Breton dukes had again become too strong to permit this, and the Normans began either to busy themselves in French politics or to look round for more distant lands to conquer. There is good evidence of the extremely Scandinavian character of the population of the whole of the new duchy. The pirates this time (and perhaps on many previous occasions) brought their wives with them, and there is no proof that they readily intermarried with Frankish women. Neither is it

[1] Rouen like London no doubt owes its importance to the fact that it is the lowest convenient crossing-place of the great river, as well as to the great riches of the Seine valley.

probable that any feudal arrangement was made between Rollo and King Charles, or between Rollo and his former companions. Normandy was an alodial gift and the first Norman barons were alodial holders; feudal custom is not traceable in the duchy before the eleventh century. Rollo 'meted out their lands to them with the rope' after old Scandinavian fashion. Nor is the name *Dux* regularly applied to the Norman ruler before the eleventh century, though *Princeps* is found (no doubt a loose use) as early as 920. Rollo's 'Laws,' scraps of which are preserved in an eleventh-century chronicle, are wholly Norse. Bayeux is heathen, and talks Danish long after Rouen is a model French and Christian capital. If a French king (as once Louis IV.) tries to interfere in Normandy, help will come from Scandinavia, Louis will be beaten and even held to ransom. Otherwise the first three Norman dukes, Rollo (died 933), William Longsword (died 943), Richard the Fearless (died 996), will be loyal to the wearer of the French crown.

Very few other people were loyal to it at all. Duke Robert, brother of the late King Odo, did not perhaps wish to be disloyal, but he was disappointed at not finding his King Charles simple enough to let him govern in his name. Charles did indeed manage to lay fairly successful hands on Lorraine; the Carolings were always popular there, the most powerful person in that region, the Count of Hainault, was devoted to them, and Charles held Lorraine peacefully till his own captivity, recognising in that district one Gilbert as his vassal, almost as duke, in 915. In the rest of his dominions Charles was at the mercy of Duke Robert, and of a terrible person called Herbert, Count of Vermandois, whose lands in Picardy and Champagne marched with Robert's own.[1]

Meanwhile things in Germany were going from bad to worse and to worst. The reigns of Louis the Child (died 911) and Conrad (died 918) were the most distressful

[1] The fief of Vermandois takes its title from Virmandis, the Latin name of the town of Saint Quentin near the source of the river Somme. The counts were originally vassals of the Bishop of Noyon, but could not forget that they had Caroling blood in their veins.

period in her history before the Thirty Years' War of the seventeenth century. There were eight Hungarian invasions in twenty years. The old tribal divisions which now begin to be called the four 'duchies,' Bavaria, Swabia, Franconia, and Saxony,[1] though differing little in speech and less in race, were showing tendencies to pull apart again, and to set up as great feudal provinces, owing, or at least acknowledging, no tie to any king at all. Saxony was at death-grips with Northern Slavs and Danes on the Elbe; Bavaria was losing ground to Southern Slavs on the Danube. The Hungarians, however, had effected one good thing, they had broken the Slavonic tribes in half and driven a wedge between them. In the long-run they proved themselves to be capable, Turks though they were, of assimilating civilisation to a far greater extent than any Slav tribe; within a century of their first inroad they had become good Latin Christians and settled down into Dacia, which we shall henceforth call Hungary. Without them an unbroken barrier of Slavs would have stretched from the Baltic to Thrace.

Germany, however, was for the moment at the mercy of these same Hungarians; its South-eastern Marks fell altogether or ceased to be defended, while the heads of the great families quarrelled among themselves. The leaders

[1] Much ink has been spilt to little purpose over the origin of the four duchies and their dukes, but it is tolerably clear that in the thirty-nine years of anarchy between Louis the German (died 876) and Henry the Fowler, German feudality grew apace. Small men grouped themselves, for protection's sake, round great men, great men round greater men. The very people whom Louis the German had employed and controlled as counts set up for themselves as dukes, with private courts and private armies; and, as was most natural, the grouping followed the grouping of older tribes. Bavaria got a new Duke Arnulf and a new dynasty early in the tenth century; Swabia, after being disputed in civil war between two leading counts, was grabbed by one of them called Erchanger at the end of the reign of Louis the Child; Franconia was torn from the Babenbergs by Conrad who became King of Germany in 912. Saxony had the most respectable history, for its dukes were descended from a loyal servant of Louis the German called Liudolf, the founder of the monastery of Gandersheim.

in the strife were Conrad of Franconia, whose family strength was mainly on the Lahn, and Adalbert of Babenberg, whose lands lay on the Saale and Upper Main. Conrad was nominally loyal to little Louis, and got the head of the rival house put to death in the very year in which the Hungarians first reached the Elbe (906). Louis died in 911, and of course there was a Conservative-Carol-ing party among the bishops which proposed to offer the crown to Charles the Simple. But what help could he give? he was busy in annexing Lorraine. The Archbishop of Mainz therefore proposed Conrad, and in 912 Conrad was elected by the heads of the four duchies. Unfortunately the rule of the sturdiest of these duchies, Saxony, passed almost at once from Otto, a friend of Conrad's, to Otto's son Henry who was his bitterest foe; he and Conrad were already engaged in a struggle for the Mark of Thuringia. Sheer chaos followed; one bishop was blinded by the neighbouring counts, another killed by the men of his own Cathedral city. The bishops, who as a whole certainly supported Conrad, also encouraged him in arbitrary and bloody acts against the great nobles, and so the prestige of the crown steadily declined. But the turn of the tide came when Conrad, whose reign had been one long civil war with Henry of Saxony, sent, from his deathbed, the crown and other insignia of royalty to this very Henry, as being the only person strong enough to take them up (918).

The Duchy of Saxony, the last to be Christianised, was the best remaining source of strength in Germany. It was still the home of the small armed freeholder and foot-soldier,[1] who in the other duchies was rapidly disappearing before the growth of the feudal principalities. It had great religious foundations, of which Bremen, Madgeburg, Quedlinburg, New Corbey, and Gandersheim were the most important; but it had very few towns or fortresses east of the Weser, and, though perpetually struggling to grow northwards towards Eider and Schlei and eastwards

[1] Who actually marched to battle in *a straw hat* (Wittikind is our authority for this).

towards Oder, it had to fight every inch of this advance against Danes and Slavs. The traditionary descent of Duke Henry from a Saxon ally of Charlemagne is incapable of proof; but his grandfather had been a great man under Louis the German, his family had married into the Frankish house of the Billungs, and also into the royal house. His father Otto had accompanied Arnulf to Italy, and had been rewarded with large grants of land. His own second wife, Matilda, was traditionally descended from Charlemagne's old enemy, Wittikind, the heathen hero of the war of independence. It is clear that Henry had very little Caroling blood in him; he also had no episcopal favour. He was never anointed, perhaps never even crowned by a bishop; one tradition says that he refused these honours and meant his refusal to be a snub to the great clergy. But he was a man of exemplary piety after the lights of his day. When in 922 he heard that Rudolf of Burgundy had got the 'Holy Lance of Constantine,' with some of the nails of the True Cross in it, he made large offers for purchase. But, on refusal, he took the simpler method of threatening fire and sword to Rudolf's whole kingdom unless he would surrender the lance. Rudolf promptly listened 'to the just request of the just king,' who thereon loaded him with gifts of gold and silver and gave him part of the Duchy of Swabia.[1] Henry's son Otto inherited the lance and used it with terrific effect against the Hungarians in 955.

Henry was at first the candidate of Saxony and Franconia only; Bavaria and Swabia had to be won over with the gifts of great privileges for their dukes. What Charles the Simple and his powerful vassal Gilbert in Lorraine would say to his elevation was doubtful. Charles at least could not *do* much, for he was always being tossed

[1] Liutprand, *Antapodosis*, iv., 25. Wittikind (i., 25), however says that Henry received the lance with the other *regalia* from his predecessor King Conrad. There were several 'Holy Lances' in the Middle Ages, notably those of St Maurice and St Longinus, each claiming to be that mentioned in St John xix. 34. The most famous was the one presented by Sultan Bajazet II. to Pope Innocent VIII. in 1492.

and gored by his own nobles, who in 920 very nearly deposed him. Henry and Charles had a meeting in 921 on a raft in the Rhine, with their armies drawn up on either bank, and swore to keep the peace with each other. Two years later Charles was deposed by Duke Robert and Herbert of Vermandois, and Duke Robert was elected king.[1] There was civil war, for Lorraine at least held for the Caroling, and Robert was killed in battle within a year of his accession; one Ralph or Raoul was elected in his place. Meanwhile the Count of Vermandois had caught and imprisoned poor Charles, whose wife Edgiva, a daughter of Edward the Elder of Wessex, fled with her infant son to England. 'Nothing has gone right in France,' wrote Charles to Henry two years later (while sending him the hand of the blessed St Denis set in gold and jewels) 'since the illustrious martyr St Vitus[2] deserted us to go to you.' Once Charles was liberated for a short time but died in captivity in 929.

This Ralph, Rudolf, or Raoul who 'reigned' from 923-36 in France by the courtesy of Duke Hugh the Great, son of the late King Robert, was brother-in-law of the said Hugh. He was also cousin to his namesake Rudolf, King of Burgundy, and he died without children. Hugh the Great for his part was brother-in-law of Herbert of Vermandois who married his sister; he was brother-in-law of Charles the Simple, for his second wife Ethel was, like Queen Edgiva, a daughter of our great King Edward of Wessex; he was to become in 930 brother-in-law also to Otto, son of the German King Henry, for Otto's first wife was Edith, sister of the said Ethel and the said Edgiva; while as his third wife Hugh later on took a sister of the same Otto called Hedwig (which is with us Avice, a beautiful name unfortunately almost extinct in England). One is rather astonished that Hugh the Great never took the crown of France for himself; but he was evidently what the French call an *esprit froid*, content with the substance of power, which

[1] He is Robert I. of France, though he is not always reckoned.

[2] St Vitus' bones had been moved from France to New Corbey by Louis I.

the wearing of the crown would actually have diminished. At any rate he paved the way for his son and his son's dynasty, which wore it, in unbroken male descent, for eight hundred years.

Meanwhile Raoul of France and Henry of Germany stood face to face on the question of Lorraine. The deposition of his ally, Charles, set the latter free from any scruples as to treaties: Henry held Lorraine to be German land, and he proceeded to swallow it between the years 923 and 926. He must have managed cleverly to win over such an independent person as Gilbert, whom he permitted to rule the province as a German duke, with a Saxon princess, Henry's own daughter Gerberga, to wife. Henceforth there are five German duchies instead of four; and, before his death, King Raoul gave up all French claims upon Lorraine. Raoul, for the rest, saw his country swept by the Hungarians in 926, when the body of St Remy had to set out on its travels again. Sometimes the saints took vengeance on such marauders; Flodoard tells us of one poor brigand who rashly laid his hand on an altar dedicated to St Martin; the hand at once adhered to the marble, and his fellows had to chip away a bit of the altar to free him; and, 'as returned captives told us,' the man carried the marble about with him till his dying day. Raoul saw also the abdication of Rollo and the accession of William Longsword, whose Norman duchy he was obliged to round off with the gift of the Cotentin; saw, above all, the perilous increase of the great fief of Vermandois, and of that of his own brother-in-law Hugh, who wrung from him the gift of the County of Maine. In fact poor Raoul had to give to everyone everything for which he was asked, upon pain of deposition.

But across the Rhine King Henry I. proceeded very differently; he found a chaos and he left the beginnings of an orderly kingdom. He began by buying in 924 a nine years' truce with the Hungarians, who thereupon went off to plunder France. When, two years later, he had got thorough hold of Lorraine, he turned his attention to the Slavonic tribes beyond the Elbe. It was then that

he 'took Brannibor, a fortress of the Wends'—that first appearance of Brandenburg in history which delighted Thomas Carlyle so much (928). Like Edward the Elder in his reconquest of central England from the Danes, Henry relied largely on the building of fortresses, or burgs, *Anglice* burhs,[1] *i.e.*, wooden castles on raised earthen mounds with a circuit of earthworks and ditches round them. Probably Henry was not the first person since Charlemagne to do this; Charles the Bald had begun fortifications at fords and bridges, Arnulf had built a fortress of some sort at Eichstadt; the use of wooden fortifications was well known to the invading Northmen. Anyhow several of Henry's burgs grew up into the great cities of Northern Germany; and it is quite likely that he built them at places (*e.g.* at Quedlinburg) where there was already an undefended religious foundation. Meissen was undoubtedly one of his creations, Merseburg another. They would be places of refuge for the country people when a Slav or Hungarian raid came. Henry 'the Fowler' becomes henceforth Henry the Builder.[2] What perhaps was really original in Henry's burgs was that he provided a regular means of garrisoning them; out of every nine of the *agrarii milites*, says Wittikind, one was to come and live in the burg, and the other eight were to cultivate his lands for him. Who were these *milites*?—the word in the eleventh century is always going to mean a knight, a horse soldier; but perhaps Wittikind just uses it for a man liable to military service of any kind; for a knight's horse would not be of much use inside a wooden castle. Whether any rotation of service was implied we

[1] The word *burgus* in the sense of a fortified tower, *castellum parvulum*, is used by Vegetius writing in the fourth century, and the older etymologists connected it with the Greek πύργος; but the N. E. D. points out that *burh* is a word common to all early Teutonic and Scandinavian languages. Vegetius may have picked it up among the *fœderati* of the Imperial armies.

[2] The name 'Fowler' was given him from the story that, when the messengers of the late King Conrad came to his rude court with the insignia of royalty, they found the rustic duke busy making snares for birds.

do not know, but the late Professor Maitland has showed us something of the kind existing in eleventh-century England. To both Moslem and Christian in Spain, as well as to the Saracens in Italy, these fortified castles and some system of castle-guard were known. Henry even ordered that all 'moots, merry-makings, and markets' (*concilia, convivia, conventus*[1]) were in future to take place inside towns.

But Henry also did something that the old English kings did not think of doing; he began to create a heavy cavalry. The horse soldier was the coming force in the world, as our ancestors found out at Hastings a century and a half later. Although there is good reason for believing that the continental Saxons retained a large proportion of well-armed infantry longer than any other continental warriors, Henry perceived that mail-clad knights would make a greater impression on the swarms of Slavonic and Hungarian archers. In France horse soldiers were beginning to tell in battle against Norse and Saracen pirates;[2] even the settled Normans were becoming horse soldiers. The result of these military reforms was that, when his nine years' truce was up, Henry was able to scatter (rather than to annihilate) a vast Hungarian host on the river Unstrut in 933; it was the first European victory over these creatures, and it made a deep impression. He then turned to the Danes, gave them a severe lesson between Schlei and Eider, drove them back behind their Danework, and colonised the quite new Mark of Schleswig with Saxons. Against the Slavonic Wends he built Meissen and created the Mark of Misnia on the Elbe, near where that river emerges from the Bohemian Mountains. Altogether it would be difficult to overrate the debt which civilisation owes to this practical German soldier, who died in 936.

Wittikind says that at the end of his life Henry had

[1] How frequently truth may have been sacrificed by a mediæval chronicler for the sake of some such alliterative jingle!

[2] Flodoard, under the year 932, tells us of a Gascon knight who had a very strong horse more than one hundred years old!

thoughts of interfering in Italy, but this is perhaps a reflection of the later career of his son Otto the Great. It was, indeed, high time that someone should interfere there. We left the popes and their ladies at the end of the last chapter struggling to maintain an independence between Berengar on the north and the Saracens on the south. John X., however disreputable his origin may have been, was a most active man, who at once set to work to remedy the evils of his country. The Saracens swarmed all round Rome, and their great castle on the Garigliano was the mother of numerous lesser dens of brigandage in the hills that bordered the *Campagna*. There had been no emperor crowned since the now blind Louis of Provence, 901, though Berengar had taken the Italian crown at Pavia. In 915 John managed to galvanise Berengar with a promise of the Imperial crown into sending, though he did not come himself, substantial help to a great Christian league. Better still, he galvanised an Empress-regent of Constantinople, and the South Italian cities and dukes, and so got together a fleet as well as an army. Theophylactus and an old Spoletan soldier called Alberic appeared as generals; the pope himself fought in the battle, and the great castle on the Garigliano was taken. A real breathing space was thus obtained, though it did not prevent fresh raids from Africa, where a new and vigorous Moslem dynasty called the 'Fatimite' had recently become independent of either caliphate; the Sicilian Saracens refused allegiance to this, and there was a Moslem civil war. But other outlaws continued to pour from Spain on to the Ligurian coast, and in 935 these took Genoa. This was in the reign of Caliph Abderrahman III., the greatest of the Ommiad rulers of Cordova, who wished for peace with the Christian powers outside Spain (he had his hands quite full of those inside it), but could not restrain his own outlaws.

Whether it were before or after his victory that Pope John crowned Berengar emperor we do not know; but it was about 915. Thus, for a moment, a pope, all honour to him, had played the Italian patriot and had been the champion of Italian unity. He could not long continue to

be so; a native emperor with any real power would have been fatal to the papal claims, and far more formidable than a distant Frank or German. John, therefore, soon began to stir up enemies to his new creature—marquises of Ivrea, of Tuscany, kings of Provence, kings of Upper Burgundy. Berengar, whose power never really extended west of the Adda or south of the Po, was not particular whom he called in—'Hungarians if you like'—against these intrusive persons. The Hungarians came, sacked and burned Pavia,[1] and somebody assassinated Berengar in 924; the savages then passed on over the Alps into Provence and Septimania and sacked Nismes. Pope John soon managed to quarrel also with his Roman generals, Theophylactus and Alberic, and there was civil war in Rome. The pope was no more particular than Berengar whom he employed; once at least he had Hungarians in his pay. Alberic, who was the first husband of the wicked Marozia, was driven from Rome, and we do not know his end, nor that of Theophylactus; Marozia immediately married Guy, Marquis of Tuscany; the Hungarians came back and ravaged all Central Italy.

Meanwhile, Rudolf II. of Upper Burgundy had got one party to call him King of Italy, and Hugh of Provence soon got another; this Hugh was a great-grandson of the Emperor Lothair, and a half-brother and bitter enemy of Marozia's new husband, Guy. He was a most dangerous person, speciously devout, really cunning and wicked. Liutprand, who was brought up as a choir-boy at his court, retained a sneaking liking for him, but confesses that he filled all the North Italian churches with his bastards. John seems to have turned to him for help against Marozia and Guy, but before Hugh could come these persons managed to abolish John, probably by strangling him in prison (928). Soon after this Marozia, now calling herself *Senatrix* and *Patricia*, created her

[1] It is only fair to say that Liutprand (*Antap.*, iii., 1-4) says that this raid happened after Berengar's death, and that the savages were not called in by Berengar.

own son pope, as John XI. (931-936). Hugh, meanwhile, had stopped off his rival Rudolf by ceding Provence to him,[1] and meant to be king of Italy and emperor himself. Marozia saw that she must make terms with him, and, when her second husband Guy died in 932, she immediately invited Hugh to come to Rome and receive her hand.

Then occurred a most strange and important revolution in Rome. Marozia had, by her first husband Alberic, a son of the same name; he was required to serve as a page at the wedding of his new stepfather, who, in the course of his ministrations, boxed his ears. The young man rushed out of the castle of St Angelo, where the wedding feast was taking place, and called the Roman people to arms against 'harlots and tyrants.' Hugh escaped with difficulty, what became of Marozia is unknown. But young Alberic, evidently a man of energy and ability, soon appears as *Princeps atque omnium Romanorum Senator;* and, as there was no emperor from 924 till 962, there was no one, unless it should be a pope, to dispute his position. Alberic, in fact, comes very near to the later Italian tyrant (of the good variety), the 'strong man' of the Renaissance, who arms his own citizens, whose motto is self-reliance, whose text-book is the 'Prince' of Machiavelli. Evidently it was a military power that Alberic wielded, though its limits did not extend much beyond the old 'Duchy of Rome.' Liutprand calls it *monarchiam civitatis Romanæ.* The one Roman fortress, the castle of St Angelo, was his. The militia of the city, divided into twelve schools according to 'regions' of the city (not the old Augustan regions), was at his disposal and was paid by him; perhaps pay was a new thing. His name was on coins together with that of the pope for the time being. His were the judges, and there was no appeal save to himself. The nobles he

[1] It was this cession in 930, or 933 (so Dummler in his re-edition of Waitz' *Liutprand*, iii., 48), which made the united kingdom of Burgundy, see above notes on pp. 311, 312. Rudolf II. reigned till 937, and was succeeded by a son Conrad, who reigned till 993, with some interruptions to be recorded below.

called together in a 'senate,' though he alone kept the title of *Senator*:

"Rectorque Senatus *nec* regnantis erat."[1]

We have no evidence that he was a gory tyrant, or a man of blood at all; but, inasmuch as he kept five successive popes, beginning with his own half-brother John XI., completely under his thumb, the churchmen who wrote history could never pardon him. Yet personally he seems to have been devout, and the friend of the great Abbot Odo of Cluny, who travelled to Italy from that famous new foundation (of which we shall soon read) to reform the terribly dissolute and worldly monks of the south. Though there is some evidence that Alberic was inclined to seek confirmation of his power from Constantinople, he never actually entered an Eastern alliance, and it was on himself that he depended and on his Romans; indeed, he made them for a time deserve the name. Three times (933, 936, 941) he drove Hugh's armies from the walls; once, by the mediation of Abbot Odo, a truce was patched up and Alberic married his stepfather Hugh's daughter.

The table of kindred and affinity counted for little in those days, unless the popes or other ecclesiastics had any special interest in enforcing obedience to it.[2] When Rudolf of Burgundy died in 937, Hugh, who had just married his son Lothair to Rudolf's daughter Adelaide, promptly seized Rudolf's widow, married her himself, and grabbed back his old county of Provence. This may have consoled him for his failure in central Italy, but he had the north of it pretty well in his grip until about 945.

Meanwhile Berengar II. had appeared upon the scene, grandson of Berengar I.; being only Marquis of Ivrea, he wished for the Italian and Imperial crowns, and he began to head a party against King Hugh. Hugh was

[1] 'Rectorque Senatus, sed regnantis erat.' So Cato in his panegyric on Pompey in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, ix., 190.

[2] Thus, at the end of the tenth century, in spite of dozens of worse irregularities, we are surprised to find even the liberally minded Gerbert much shocked because King Robert the Pious of France had married his own third cousin.

able for a time to hold his own and drive Berengar to fly to the new German King Otto; but when in 946 Berengar came back with troops from Swabia to help him, Hugh could barely hold his own in Provence, even though he employed Saracens from Fraxinetum; and he was driven out of Italy for good. Hugh died in 947 and Berengar ruled as guardian of Hugh's son Lothair till 950, when the young man (who was crowned King of Italy, 946) died. Berengar thereon seized the crown, seized Lothair's widow Adelaide for his own son; Adelaide refused to wed the son, and was imprisoned. Thus a great crisis was approaching, for Adelaide in her despair called upon Otto of Germany.

Everyone, in fact, was calling, or just about to call on Otto. It was to Otto's court that the young Conrad of Burgundy had fled when Hugh had seized Provence on Rudolf's death. It was to Otto that, first the rebels against the new King of France (Louis IV.), and then that king himself, had turned for help. Otto (who before the century ends is called 'the Great') was born in 912, and owed his power in Germany mainly to the fact that his father, Henry the Fowler, had departed from the usual Teutonic plan of dividing his inheritance among his sons, of whom four survived him, one, Thankmar, by an earlier and doubtful marriage, and three, Otto, Henry, and Bruno, by the good Matilda. Unity had thereby achieved a victory over heredity. Matilda, indeed, seems to have wished to crown young Henry, in spite of her husband's clear designation of Otto. But the leaders of the army (*cuncti principes*, says Wittikind) chose Otto, and the great churchmen were enthusiastic on the same side; Otto therefore was crowned and anointed in 936; in conscious imitation of Charlemagne, and as if he foresaw his high destinies, he chose to be crowned at Aachen and to hold there his coronation feast with full Caroling ceremonies. King Raoul of France was just dead also, and Hugh the Great, again passing himself over, persuaded the French nobles to send to England for his own nephew, Louis, aged fifteen, the son of Charles the Simple. This boy, we remember, had been carried by his mother Edgiva to the

West Saxon court for refuge in 923. He was now crowned as Louis IV., and was called Louis d'Outremer 'from beyond the seas.' He, Louis, and his son Lothair and grandson Louis V., the last of the Carolings, were by no means the *fainéants* that history, made after the accession of the 'Third Race' of French kings, has represented them to be. They had good West Saxon blood in their veins, and highly honourable German kings to help them when they would let these do so.

Hugh, however, had no intention of allowing his nephew any power, and poor Louis' reign was one long series of struggles and of strippings from the crown of every castle, every farm, every tax, toll, or prerogative to which it still laid claim. Hugh held all the richest part of the North, the 'Duchy of France'[1] and County of Maine, and now he wrung from Louis the Duchy of Burgundy[2] also. The Duchy of France evidently included all between the Loire and the Norman Duchy; perhaps it even implied some suzerainty over the other Frank fiefs. Louis IV. calls Hugh *secundus a nobis*. Richer (ii., 39) once calls him *Omnium Galliarum Ducem*; possibly the analogy of the great duchies of Germany counted for something in fixing Hugh's position.

We have, then, to follow the fortunes of Otto I. in Germany for fourteen years before we can allow him to look over the Alps at all. His eyes, so far as his own German rebels will permit them, have to be continually turning from his Eastern to his Western frontier. He and his son Otto II. are to be the hammers of the Northern Slavs. And, as a preliminary, we must remember that, till Henry the Fowler had founded the oft-imperilled Mark of Schleswig, no German had touched the Baltic at all; the whole of Mecklenburg and Pomerania were Slav and

[1] It is in the year 943 that the title *Dux Franciæ* was given to Hugh (Flodoard, *sub anno* 943 *ad fin*). There is an excellent note on the subject in M. Lauer's edition of Flodoard in the *Collection des Textes*, 1905, p. 90.

[2] *I.e.*, the land between the headwaters of the Seine and Saône—not to be confused with the 'Kingdom,' nor with the later 'County' of Burgundy; *vide supra*, note on p. 311.

Wend, and indeed remained so till long after the year 1000; and, in the last seventeen years of the tenth century, the Slavs, Wends, and Danes were actually gaining ground in those countries.[1] On the other hand the Southern Slavs on the Danube were now always in retreat before the Babenberg family, which was steadily creating the Mark confirmed to it in 976 by the name of Austria.

One Boleslav of Bohemia began the disturbance on Otto's Eastern frontier with the overthrow of such germs of Christianity as had got east of the Elbe. The Hungarians chimed in and raided through Germany into Aquitaine. Otto despatched a 'legion of thieves' from Merseburg to deal with the Slavs; for his good father, wishing to people that fortress, had filled it with pardoned robbers who were instructed to continue the exercise of their talents east of the Elbe. The poor thieves won a great victory, but then, dispersing to their more natural task, were cut up to the last thief. Otto's best friend, Duke Arnulf of Bavaria, died 937, and his successor Eberhard refused to recognise Otto as king; Franconia next fell away. Then Gilbert of Lorraine, hitherto loyal, made overtures to young King Louis of France, under whom, perhaps, he might hope for more independence. Louis foolishly agreed to help him. In fact it was a regular and very serious feudal rebellion, like that at the beginning of the reign of Henry I. in England; worst of all there were Otto's own brothers Thankmar and young Henry ready to play the part that Robert Curthose played to our Henry I. But Otto had his sturdy Saxons to rely upon, beat his rebels in detail, and made some of them 'carry dogs to Madgeburg' (apparently a symbol of disgrace).[2] Before 939 was out Gilbert had been drowned in the Rhine, and Otto in 940 avenged the French interference by a march to Paris. Louis thereon made peace

[1] It was in the last year of Otto II. (982) that the tide began to turn again in their favour.

[2] Wittikind, ii., 6; Schröder (p. 779) mentions 'dog-carrying' as one of the punishments of the later Middle Ages.

and married Otto's sister, Gerberga, widow of Gilbert. The Slav task was committed to Gero, Margrave of Misnia or Meissen, and to the family of Billung, Otto's cousin and friend, ancestor of the later Dukes of Saxony. Close behind the Saxon sword came the Saxon missionaries and colonisers. Vast numbers of German peasants were planted among the Slavs between the Elbe and the Oder, and 'Lusatia' began to grow into a Mark. Havelberg, Brandenburg, and Schleswig became bishoprics, and even in Denmark sees were planted at Ripen and Aarhus; we hear of Danish bishops coming to a synod at Ingelheim in 948. Boleslav of Bohemia made complete submission in 950. In 941 brother Henry had found that rebellion did not pay, reconciled himself with Otto, and soon received as his reward the great Duchy of Bavaria, with a daughter of its late ducal family to wife. Matilda, hitherto a partisan of Henry, was also made at one with Otto by the influence of the good English Edith, and became henceforth her son's wisest counsellor.

Thus Germany was daily growing stronger, while France or rather its king got weaker and weaker. Vermandois, Flanders, and once even Normandy were in arms against Louis IV., and Hugh the Great steadily bullied him. The fighting was largely for the possession of the two great bases of the old royal power, the rock-fortress of Laon and the see of Rheims, for which each party had a candidate. Once (945) Louis was actually taken prisoner and held to ransom by the Normans of Rouen. He had rashly interfered with these warriors after the murder of their Duke William Longsword in 943, and had tried to act as guardian to the little Richard, aged ten. The Normans promptly sent for help to their relatives in Denmark, and King Harold 'Bluetooth' either came or sent a large reinforcement of Northmen. One account says that he stayed some time and administered the duchy for Richard; it was after this that Louis IV. sought the friendship of Otto and found it valuable. The synod of Ingelheim in 948, under Otto's presidency, to which also papal legates came, pronounced strongly in

favour of the royalist cause in France, and excommunicated Hugh, who three years later made his peace for good with Louis. In 954 Louis died, as result of a fall out hunting, and his thirteen-year-old son Lothair peacefully succeeded him; in Lothair's name Hugh the Great ruled quietly till his own death in 956.

Meanwhile Otto's Queen Edith also had died in 948, and, if the great German king wished to get a foot in Italy, it would be at least prudent to listen to the wails of the imprisoned lady Adelaide. Possibly Adelaide had been in communication with the last of Alberic's five popes Agapetus II. (946-55). Agapetus had certainly been whispering to Otto to come, and to deliver Rome from the bogey of good government by that extremely secular prince Alberic. And Berengar's tyranny and cupidity in North Italy had raised him plenty of enemies there. Liutprand tells us that, under pretence of buying off the Hungarians, Berengar levied taxes on lay and clerical property alike, but kept most of the money for himself; the practice was one not unknown to some English kings. Therefore over the Alps in 951 came Otto; he was crowned at Pavia and married Adelaide who made him a brave, good, and prudent wife; Berengar was at his feet in a moment. But as yet he did not dare to push on to Rome; perhaps he did not like the look of Alberic's Roman soldiers. He therefore returned with his wife to Germany, whither in the next year Berengar followed him, only to submit and return as a vassal King of Italy. But Otto gave Berengar's old Mark of Friuli, under the name of Verona, to his brother Henry of Bavaria. Alberic, therefore, in 954 was able to die in possession of full power after a reign—it was nothing less—of twenty-two years. On his deathbed, he left his principality to his young son Octavian, aged sixteen, and made the Roman nobles swear that they would get this boy made pope on the first vacancy. This amazing compact was fulfilled in the next year, and Octavian, the first pope to change his baptismal name, became John XII. in 955.

Not unnaturally Otto's first Italian expedition had

produced difficulties for him at home. In the first place his own eldest son Liudolf, whom he had created Duke of Swabia, had no mind to see his father marry again, and no doubt all Adelaide's great influence was hostile to Liudolf, who thereupon stirred up a second feudal revolt, a revolt which coincided ominously, even suspiciously, with a fresh advance of the Hungarians in great force. Conrad 'the Red,' a brave soldier to whom Otto had given a daughter and the Duchy of Lorraine, joined Liudolf, professing to be jealous of the influence of Duke Henry of Bavaria, who certainly was bitterly hostile to Liudolf. The Archbishop of Mainz, who had given trouble in the earlier rebellion, was also in it, and it cost Otto both diplomacy and some fighting to put down the rebels. His best supporter was his youngest brother Bruno, to whom he now gave the Archbishopric of Cologne. The rebel strength was concentrated at Mainz and Regensburg, and Otto had barely triumphed over it when the sudden appearance of a great Hungarian force in the neighbourhood of Augsburg brought everyone to their senses. Otto was not in time to get his own Saxons southwards, but the forces of Bavaria and Franconia, ex-rebel and royalist alike, came to the rescue. Conrad and the king himself, with the Holy Lance in his hand, were the heroes of the great battle of the Lechfeld, 10th August 955, and after the fight was over Otto's troops hailed him as *Imperator*. Conrad was killed at the end of the day, but the German victory was complete. Otto had saved not only Germany but Europe from this scourge for good. Such Hungarians as were left rolled back on Dacia and stayed there. Otto treated those that he caught as bandits and killed them in cold blood.

All this time Saxony was at death-grips with a new Slav rising, and Otto, fresh from his victory on the Lech, hurried over the Elbe to assist Margrave Gero; he won another great victory in the same year on the Recknitz. The death of Louis IV. and the coronation of the youth Lothair in 954 had not disturbed the peaceable relations between Germany and France, although Hugh the Great

had helped the rebels of 953. In Italy alone a fresh storm was brewing. There Berengar, taking advantage of Otto's home troubles, had quarrelled with Henry of Bavaria over the Mark of Verona, had intrigued with Tuscany, with Spoleto, with anyone who would listen to him. Liudolf, pardoned but deprived of his Duchy of Swabia, was sent in 956 to teach him manners, and died on his way home. Berengar grabbed at Ravenna, at Verona, at Spoleto, and was preparing to advance upon Rome.

All these foolish little people seem to have been quite blind to the coming danger from the North. John XII., for his part, having none of his father's ability, courage, or good morals, proceeded to enjoy his united temporal and spiritual principality after the manner of the beasts that perish; he lived a wholly abandoned life and mocked at his own sacred office. And he lived in constant dread of Berengar and of Berengar's vigorous son Adalbert.

Whether, then, it were John himself who in 961 called in Otto against Berengar, or John's outraged Romans who called him in against John, or whether, indeed, he needed any calling, we do not know—Liutprand thinks it was John who called; but Otto was the only possible deliverer for all parties. He was to some extent in the position of Charlemagne before 774, and the tradition of Charlemagne was strongly in his mind. It was in the mere 'nature of things' that he should covet the crown of Charlemagne. And so he came; before starting he left the administration of Lorraine and Germany to his brother Bruno of Cologne (to whom he had given Conrad's Duchy) and to his natural son William, whom he had recently made Archbishop of Mainz. His good mother Matilda was on her knees to all the saints night and day for him. He rolled over Berengar with perfect ease, left Lombardy in friendly German hands, and passed on to Rome to be crowned emperor by John XII. in 962. This turned out to be a great event and a great landmark, for it began the practice —and the practice was the basis of the theory—that the

crown of the Holy Roman Empire should be annexed to the crown of Germany. But at the time it was, in my opinion, somewhat of an accident. If there had been a king of the West Franks (or France) as powerful as Otto, men would as naturally, perhaps even more naturally, have called upon him to be Charlemagne's successor in Italy. No doubt the fact that Otto had in 936 been crowned with one of Charlemagne's crowns at Aachen carried great weight; no doubt the utter weakness of the last Carolings in France put them quite out of the question. John promised to renounce all dealings with Berengar, and Otto promised to John restoration of all the property of the Church as well as a good deal that had never been the property of the Church 'when God should have put it into his hands.' This promise was enshrined in the so-called 'Privilege of Otto,' a document seen by no profane eyes till the Vatican archives were opened to the world in 1883. It is undoubtedly a tenth-century document, and a reproduction both of the doubtful 'Privilege' of 817 and of the Constitution of Lothair of 824. Side by side with vast promises of territory to St Peter (Spoleto, Benevento, Tuscany; Naples and Gaeta; Parma and Mantua; Venice and Istria), provision is made for the Imperial confirmation of papal elections, for the heredity of the crown in Otto's own house, for an oath of allegiance to be taken to the emperor by all Romans. The worst of it was that a century and a half of practical independence had left the Roman nobles with small intention of real submission either to emperor or pope, especially if the emperor should be a foreigner. If ever there should be a foreign pope? Then there would be a revolt royal.

Indeed the emperor's back was no sooner turned than the first of a series of revolts broke out. Adalbert, son of Berengar, came to head it and John undoubtedly fostered it. Hungarian and Saracen help was asked for it by this precious pair. Back came the emperor, and John fled to Tivoli, hurling excommunications which

Otto ignored. And the pope's evil life was so notorious[1] that Otto had no difficulty in getting a synod, composed largely of Italian but also of some German ecclesiastics, to depose him and elect Leo. VIII., without asking the Roman people whether they willed it or not. No Caroling had acted in such a high-handed manner as this. Leo VIII. was, moreover, a layman, and had to be 'rushed' through all the orders at once to qualify him for episcopal ordination. Then followed a series of revolts, depositions, and vengeances from 963 to 966. Every time Otto left Rome (he went to Germany in 964) his nominee was driven out and some creature of the Romans chosen in his place. Every time he returned the process was reversed. Once he had to fight his way in the Roman streets; once to besiege the city and reduce it by starvation; once (966) he took a fierce vengeance and beheaded thirteen leading Roman nobles. That blood, says Gregorovius, never dried in Rome, that vengeance was never forgotten. The Romans bore to him and to all his German successors an undying hatred, which would have been more fruitful of success had not their hatred of their own popes been almost as strong.

One cannot, I fear, praise Otto I., II. and III., for their administration of Italy. One cannot call it a Church-and-State Empire, such as that of Charlemagne, that they set up. There were now no Imperial *missi;* in fact there was no central government at all, nor till 996 even a shadow of it. Occasionally there was a big German army tramping about the country or quartered in the cities; otherwise the Saxon emperors had simply to trust either to the great feudal princes, or, as these were generally disloyal, to the churchmen and the lesser feudatories. Of the popes whom they created only the

[1] Liutprand (*Historia Ottonis*, Chaps. IV.-X.) gives an amusing narration of John's offences, including his devotion to field sports, his invocation of heathen deities at the gambling table, and his omission to fortify himself with the sign of the cross. Much worse things about his life were also mentioned at the synod, which ended by rallying the pope about his bad Latin—though it must be confessed that Liutprand was hardly an appropriate reporter of this last crime.

two chosen by Otto III. had any spiritual or temporal importance, the others were nonentities. One or two German houses were endowed with Margraviates which did not last long; only one later Italian house, that of Este of Modena, owed its fortunes to Otto I., though doubtless, there were sturdy German garrisons and soldiers of fortune occasionally left behind, who never returned to the North but Italianised themselves after a generation or two.

Rome remained quiet under the German sword from 966 to Otto's death, and he had full leisure to turn his thoughts to the far South, which he intended to tear from Saracens and Greeks; and yet all along he held out an offer of friendship to those same Greeks. 'The instinct of the barbarian naturally prompts him to seek confirmation of his power from the real Rome;' such was probably the opinion of the soldier Emperor Nicephorus who ruled at Constantinople. Otto sent no less a person than Liutprand, the chronicler-bishop, to Constantinople to ask for the hand of a Greek Princess for his young son Otto II., who had been crowned co-emperor in 967. Liutprand has left an immortal, if grossly unfair description of his embassy, of the horrors of Greek food and wine (perhaps the modern κρασί), of which the Greeks drank 'bathsfull,' of the villainous ugliness of Nicephorus, whom he calls 'the sort of fellow you wouldn't like to meet in the dark.' It is from Liutprand that we learn that the Byzantine fleet was largely manned by Venetian and Amalfitan sailors. Nicephorus was indeed scornful, but it was mere reason which prompted him to reply to Otto's request for the bride,[1] 'not till you leave my Italian possessions alone.' As Otto did not do so, and even besieged Bari (968), Nicephorus not unnaturally supported Otto's foes including Adalbert, the son of that

[1] 'Three things,' said the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus in his book on the *Administration of the Empire* written in the middle of the tenth century, 'should never be given to any barbarian nation—(1) Imperial robes or crowns; (2) Greek fire; (3) A bride of the Imperial family.'

Berengar who was meditating on his past life in a German prison.

One good ally, in the South, Otto did get, Pandulf 'Ironhead' of Capua, the first 'Ghibelline' (if one may use such a word before its time) in history. Pandulf was indeed a thick-and-thin champion of the Empire, and was rewarded with a vast increase of territory including Benevento, Spoleto, and Camerino. But Otto had no fleet, and so the last word in the heel of Italy could never be his. Even on land his troops only just won in a big battle at Ascoli. Meanwhile Nicephorus went the way of most Greek emperors, and was murdered by his successor, John Zimisces, who at once reversed his policy and sent Otto the beautiful Greek daughter-in-law whom he coveted.[1] Otto made no express renunciation of his claims on the South, but gradually withdrew his troops northwards, received the Princess Theophano at Ravenna (972), went back to Germany, and died in the following year.

It is to Germany that his real greatness belongs, not to Italy. There Matilda and Archbishop William had kept things perfectly quiet during the emperor's long absences. Bruno, Archbishop of Cologne and Duke of Lorraine, had divided the latter province definitely into two duchies, an Upper and a Lower, Trier being about on the boundary between them, before his death in 965. Brother Henry of Bavaria, so troublesome at the beginning of the reign, had died in the year of the Lechfeld (955); his daughter had married Burchard, to whom Otto had given the Duchy of Swabia; his son Henry, second Duke of Bavaria of that line, was not yet old enough to earn his later name of 'the quarrelsome.' Otto's daughter Matilda was a nun (soon to be abbess) at Quedlinburg. His sister Gerberga was the widowed Queen of France, whose son Lothair, king from 954 till 986, had only the friendship of Otto to trust to, and appeared almost as a vassal of the German king-emperor. Lothair also married in 966 Emma, daughter of the

[1] Theophano, niece of Zimisces, not the lady for whom Otto had first asked.

Empress Adelaide by her first husband. After Bruno's death Adalberon (Auberon) Archbishop of Rheims (969-989), a devoted friend to the Saxon House, did everything possible to keep the peace between the two countries. The only rock ahead was the continually increasing power of the sons of Hugh the Great. The elder of these Hugh 'Capet' (the first of his line to earn that unexplained surname) held the 'Duchy of France'; the younger, Eudes or Odo, the Duchy of Burgundy. Hugh, a cold calculating creature like his father, married the heiress of the County of Poitou.

The holders of the German duchies, then, and their French affinities were very much of a 'family party' in the latter half of Otto's reign; and one realises that, unfortunately, an emperor had little else to rely upon, unless it were his clergy. For the sad truth is that, if the Empire of the Saxons had no institutions to speak of in Italy, their Kingship had not many more in Germany. The kingship itself was in fact the only institution, and apart from the family lands of its holder, it had no resources at all. It could call Diets, but it was not obliged to do so; Otto I. took the most momentous step in his career, the first march upon Italy, without consulting anyone but his family. As long, therefore, as the 'family party' held together all went well; when it ceased to do so things went anything but well. We shall have to recur to this subject again at the end of the chapter.

The Church at least was a whole-hearted supporter of Otto, and Bruno, a man of great learning and afterwards a Saint, did his best to make it a learned Church. The schools which he fostered or founded did in the next century produce a very fair crop of learned ecclesiastics, not only from Cologne but from Reichenau, Saint-Gall, Regensburg, Hersfeld, Corbey, Magdeburg, Hildesheim, Halberstadt.[1] Otto himself tried in middle life to learn Latin but in vain. He spoke, according to Wittikind who

[1] Bruno himself knew Greek, and probably used his knowledge of it with advantage in his official business when he was almost prime minister to his brother. The most curious product of the age was the

knew him (ii., 36), besides his native Saxon dialect, 'Roman,' *i.e.*, the *Lingua vulgaris* or *Lingua Romana Rustica* which was becoming French, and some Slavonic. His son, Otto II., spoke good Latin, and no doubt learned at least to speak Greek from his Greek wife; he was indeed a highly cultivated young man. The continuous eastward march of the German Church was a great feature of the first Saxon reign. It was in a synod held at Ravenna that Otto, who had long been desirous of raising Magdeburg to the rank of an archbishopric, succeeded in this task and subjected his new Northern and Eastern sees to it. This arrangement, it is true, produced some growls from the older Rhenish metropolitanates,[1] which probably lost revenue and certainly lost influence thereby. But to all his great bishops and even to abbots and abbesses Otto continually gave secular privileges and possessions. He endowed them with counties as well as episcopal lands, and gave them extensive feudal rights, such as justice, coinage, the calling of soldiers to battle. Thus he really feudalised his clergy and prepared the way for the highly unspiritual German Church of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. However regrettable this may be, it was better that the bishops and abbots should receive these privileges from the crown, and thereby acquire some tie to the crown, than that they should receive them, as otherwise they would probably have received them, from the great dukes and margraves. And we must not forget that Otto's annexation of Italy and Rome at least kept the German Church in constant contact with the nominal mother-church of Western Christendom.

nun of Gandersheim, Roswitha, who wrote 'comedies after the manner of Terence in praise of virginity' (which Terence's comedies, though highly moral, are not), and an incomplete poem about the deeds of Otto.

[1] Especially Mainz which would lose what Magdeburg gained; this partly accounts for the hostility of Otto's first Archbishop of Mainz (who was in both the feudal rebellions against Otto), and for some opposition in his later years from his son William who succeeded to that see.

A great figure, then, disappeared from the scene when Otto I. died at his villa of Memleben near Merseburg at the age of sixty-one in May 973. In his last public appearances at Quedlinburg and Merseburg he had received gifts from Bulgarian and Hungarian savages, as well as from an African sultan, and homage from the Dukes of Bohemia and Poland.

With the accession of Otto II. we begin to get a new guide to the history of France and Germany, and to some extent of Italy, in the shape of the letters of Gerbert, the real wonder of the age. Few men have been successively tutor to a King of France and to an Emperor of Rome who was also King of Germany; no other churchmen ever passed from the see of Rheims to that of Ravenna, and thence to the Papacy. No other mediæval churchman after repudiating the doctrines of the False Decretals and the donation of Constantine, ever became pope. Gerbert, afterwards Sylvester II., whose knowledge of astronomy and mathematics earned him the reputation of a necromancer, did all these things. He was probably the man of the greatest intellect, certainly one of the most learned men, that ever occupied the chair of St Peter.

He was born of humble parents in Aquitaine about 940, and educated at the monastery of Aurillac. About 967 he went, perhaps as tutor, to a Count of Barcelona, and there, in a country at least near to the Arabic influences, he probably laid the foundations of his mathematics. He went to Italy in 970, and spent a year high in favour with Otto I.; thence 'to learn logic' to Rheims where he became cathedral schoolmaster and friend to the good Archbishop Auberon, 972-82; Otto II. in the latter year gave him the Italian abbey of Bobbio, and he then took an oath of fealty to the emperor and his family. He stayed at Bobbio only a year—the turbulence of the monks destroyed his chances of study—and returned to Rheims in 984 to his old duties. The rest of his life belongs to history in which he played a leading part.

His letters, of which a collection in the shape of a 'Letter-book' of transcripts has been preserved, are

certainly an unusual product of the Dark Ages. They are written in good Ciceronian Latin, with hardly a slip in grammar; yet they are quite free of purisms, and the writer never scruples to Latinise Teutonic words where necessary for the sense. He does not, like the absurd Liutprand, quote Greek to show his knowledge of it, for that knowledge is self-evident. When he calls the Gauls 'Latins' and the Germans *barbari*, he is merely writing as he would have written in the fourth or the second century, and means no offence at all. When he calls Lower Lorraine 'Belgica' it is because he naturally thinks in terms of antiquity. Among the strange things which he knew was Cicero's *De Republica*, which we moderns only know in fragments;[1] perhaps he was the last person who saw it in its entirety. To Gerbert, the Slav is the *consuetus hostis* of the civilised European. The Greek alliances of the Imperial family were warmly furthered by him, and we once find him suggesting a similar alliance to Hugh Capet.[2] Unfortunately the Letter-book is so essentially kept for business purposes by a busy writer, that the letters are full of allusions and abbreviations of names, the clues to which are now lost to us. But in nothing is Gerbert a more extraordinary product of his age than in his strange political position; here you have an Aquitanian (and not even I, loosely as I have always spoken in this book of 'France' and 'Frenchmen,' can yet call a native of Aquitaine 'French') taking, as we shall see, a leading part in retaining the crowns of Germany and Italy for a Saxon, and in giving the crown of France away trom a Caroling to Hugh Capet; fighting at the head of the French Church, the losing battle of that Church against the popes and the monks of Cluny, and then going off to Italy to become Archbishop of Ravenna in one year and pope the next.

[1] See Letter 86, edn. Havet. The 'Dream of Scipio' out of this work has always been known; but it was not till 1822 that the most important fragment of the *De Republica* was discovered in the Vatican, with a transcript of St Augustine's commentary on the Psalms written over it.

[2] See Letter 3.

The ten years of the reign of Otto II. are divided into seven of success north of the Alps, two of failure south of them, and one of failure all round. The five great German duchies were full of turbulent feudal life, but Otto had two of them, Saxony and Franconia, in his own hands and perfectly loyal; Lorraine was also in his hands but was in immediate peril. Bavaria and Swabia kicked up their heels against the North at once. King Lothair of France joined the rebels on two occasions (973, 978) and marched into Lorraine. Once he actually got hold of Aachen, and he certainly wished to get all Lorraine for himself. But in 980 he gave way and kept the peace till Otto's death. Bavaria was the real centre of the trouble; what brother Henry had been to Otto I. at the beginning of his reign, that Henry's son called 'Henry the Quarrelsome' (*Zänker*) was to be to Otto II. He hoped through his sister, the Duchess of Swabia, to get hold of that duchy also. He intrigued with the Slavonic Dukes of Bohemia and Poland, and with the King of France. But the young emperor acted with great vigour. His Billung cousins in Saxony were quite equal, as yet, to the task of dealing with the Northern Slavs. Otto summoned his quarrelsome cousin to 'explain himself' to a Diet, drove him to fly to his Slav friends, whose territory Otto had already begun to ravage, gave the Duchy of Swabia whole to his nephew Otto (son of his half-brother Liudolf), and added to it the administration of Henry's own Duchy of Bavaria. He erected Carinthia into a separate duchy or margraviate, east of Bavaria, and it was probably now that he confirmed Austria (Ostmark) as a margraviate to the Babenberg family. In 978 another Diet, before which the repentant Henry appeared as a suppliant, Otto ordered that quarrelsome person's imprisonment at Utrecht, and in prison Henry remained till Otto's death. The Danes, who in 974 had advanced southwards, were driven back, and Otto himself followed them up into Jutland (being, I believe, the first German king to break through the Danework) and made them pay tribute. In 979 we find him again chastising the Slavs or Wends ('Guinidi,

Gerbert calls them) and offering, among other gifts, to the pacified Duke of Poland a camel, perhaps one of those which Otto I. had received in 956, together with lions, monkeys, and ostriches, from the Eastern Saracens.[1] As for the French danger, that was disposed of by a swift march, like that of Otto I., on Paris; Lothair was glad to swear friendship in 980, and German influence in Lorraine was stronger than it had been before the late French attack on it. Only in Otto's last year did the tide begin to turn against him on his northern and eastern frontiers; and that turn was obviously the result of his failure in Italy.

There, indeed, everything was going in the other direction. The instant Otto the Great was dead Rome burst out, killed his last papal creature, and set up a creature of its own called Boniface VII. The leader of the revolt was one Crescentius, who of course professed to be descended from that Crescens who was a missionary assistant of St Paul.[2] He probably aspired to be a successor of Alberic rather than a champion of popes. Otto sent somebody to drive out Boniface (who fled to Constantinople), offered the papacy first to the Abbot of Cluny, who wisely refused it, and then to a friend of the abbot's who accepted it and did his best by the name of Benedict VII. But, when Otto came at last across the Alps in 980, he found his pope a fugitive at Ravenna. He found also that the African Fatimites had at last proved victorious in Sicily (976), and were vigorously attacking Southern Italy. The best supporter of the Imperial cause, Pandulf, died in 981; he had been taking on his own iron head blows from all Otto's enemies these seven years past. His large dominions fell to pieces at once, and the Greeks were quite as eager to grab them as were the Saracens and his Italian rivals. No punishment seems to have been awarded to the Romans when Otto visited his capital with an imposing German army and brought back his pope. But, almost at once, he had to

[1] See Gerbert, Letter 91; Wittikind, iii., 56.

[2] 2 Timothy iv. 10.

depart to the Southern war, and, after taking Bari and Taranto from the Greeks, he was very badly beaten by the Saracens at Rossano[1] in 982, barely escaping with his life in a small Greek vessel; his army was annihilated. Only Northern Italy, in which his good mother Adelaide was acting as administrator, remained loyal. Otto was able to hold a Diet at Verona in 983, at which his three-year-old son Otto III. was recognised as King of Germany and Italy. Negotiations for the hire of a fleet, to be employed in the weary Southern war, were going on with Venice; but, if any promise was made by the Venetian Duke or 'Doge,' it was never fulfilled. Otto was burning to avenge Rossano, but the difficulty was to raise troops. None could be got from Germany, where the lost battle had made a terrible impression and fresh storms were brewing. It was a wild world upon which the young man of twenty-eight took his last look, with a heart perhaps broken by the contrast between the great ideal and the impossibility of fulfilling it. He died at Rome and was buried in St Peter's, the only emperor who lies there (983).

His baby son Otto III. is one of those figures which have attracted those who care for the romantic side of history, and numerous legends have grown up round his name. A later century invented the fiction that, at the end of the first millenium after Christ's birth, men believed that the second Advent was at hand,[2] and dated their letters *appropinquante fine mundi.* Such a dating (as a motive for good works) was quite common throughout the Dark Ages, and, as a matter of fact, fewer instances of it than usual are found at this particular time, and there is no contemporary evidence of any extra fear. Indeed the habit of reckoning the era from Christ's birth was by no means universal as yet even in the West. But there were plenty of other influences at work to make the end of the tenth century a superstitious age, and

[1] Or, as some say, at Stilo, or at Cotrone; after several days of fight, the Imperialists were surprised and cut up on the last day.

[2] This appears to be based on a misinterpretation of a passage of the eleventh-century chronicler, Ralf Glaber.

young Otto came to manhood under them. The son of the flower of the West and of the flower of the East combined the cleverness, such as it was, of both races with the strength of neither.

The effect of the last battle in South Italy was felt at the other extremity of Otto's realm. Before the death of Otto II., the Danes swarmed over the Northern frontier again, stubbed up their own new bishroprics as they came, and overset Hamburg for the second time. Henceforth Bremen had charge of all the Scandinavian missions, and ecclesiastical authority over Scandinavia, till the creation of the see of Lund in Southern Sweden in 1151.[1] The Slavs came too, destroyed the new sees of Havelberg and Brandenburg, and ravaged up to the Elbe. Worse still the greatest prince of Germany was allying himself with these enemies; Henry the Quarrelsome had escaped from his easy prison at Utrecht, marched upon Cologne and compelled its Archbishop to hand over to him the person of the baby king. Lothair of France, though it was not three years since he had sworn eternal friendship to Otto II., made a fierce grab at Lorraine, and also declared himself to be guardian of the baby. This was greatly to the grief of Auberon of Rheims and Gerbert, who perhaps now began to say to each other that these Carolings were incorrigible, and that it was time that France turned to a race that would not perpetually break treaties and waste Lorraine with fire and sword. Lothair certainly suspected Auberon of some such treason, but died (986) before he could prove it.

Saxony, however, was loyal to its royal house, and on Saxony the ultimate strength of Germany as yet rested. All the lesser feudatories of the kingdom rallied to the same cause. Henry tried his old Duchy of Bavaria, tried Franconia; in neither district was he well received. The good peace that the two first Ottos had made was still appreciated. Willigis, Archbishop of Mainz, now took the lead—'Let there be a Diet, and let Henry meet the

[1] It is interesting to an Englishman that this was the work of Nicholas Breakspear, afterwards Hadrian IV., the only English pope.

widow and mother of the late king at it.' At that Diet in 984 Henry was obliged to hand over little Otto to his mother Theophano; but he obtained in return the restitution of his former Duchy of Bavaria, which he held till his death in 995. Theophano became regent for her son, and spent such German strength as she could command in punitive expeditions against the Slavs, though without a great deal of success; but she held Diets all over the Empire, and on the whole kept order fairly well. She died in 991 when Otto's grandmother Adelaide, assisted by his aunt Matilda, Abbess of Quedlinburg, succeeded as regent in Germany; the regent's first experience was that of a great Danish raid, the counterpart of those which were harassing poor King Ethelred in England; it swept up to the Weser and was with difficulty beaten off.

In Italy, of course, Boniface VII. came back directly Otto II. was dead, and starved or poisoned the Imperialist pope in the castle of St Angelo, but soon died himself. John Crescentius, son of the elder of that name, seized power and called himself *patricius*, but it is clear that he was never more than the head of a faction. So when he had created a pope to his liking, John XV., he wisely sought to make terms with the Imperialists, and his pope as wisely, sought to turn himself into a compromise. In 989 we find Theophano in Rome presiding at tribunals, and quite good friends with Crescentius and his pope. After Theophano's death Adelaide administered Italy in her grandson's name, and after a time Crescentius and John quarrelled; the latter was expelled, was restored, and died 996, in which year young Otto first appeared in Italy.

Great events had meanwhile been taking place west of the Rhine, the most important of which was, perhaps, the return of Gerbert from Bobbio to Rheims in 984. The French nobles had not, I think, shown any real eagerness to support their Caroling kings in their recent attacks on Lorraine; they were too much intent on consolidating their own power against these kings at home. Lothair

died in 986, leaving a son, Louis V., aged nineteen, and a brother called Charles of Lorraine; and this Charles had a son Otto, afterwards Duke of Brabant, with whom in 1012 the male line of Charlemagne came to an utter end. Charles was a false, traitorous wretch for whom scarcely any one had a good word. Young Louis V., however, was a spirited fellow, who continued his father's policy and cited Archbishop Auberon to appear at Compiègne and explain his mysterious treason of a year or two back. But before that assembly could be held Louis V. was dead (987). Auberon came indeed to the meeting, but it was to elect Hugh Capet King of France.

It was the old story of 751 over again. He who had the power of king ought to have the name. The anathema which Pope Stephen had then spoken on any who should ever promote any other race than that of St Arnulf to the French throne, had no terrors for Auberon or for his inspirer Gerbert.

The family of Robert the Strong had been gaining in wealth, in popularity, and above all in favour with the clergy, for over a century, just in proportion as the Carolingians had been declining. The Church had found its nominal kings quite unable to protect its possessions against the great feudatories, and so its leaders must turn to some one who could do this. Hugh was such a man; and Rheims, by the mouths of Gerbert and Auberon, spoke for clergy and people in his favour at an assembly at Senlis. The great fiefs of Burgundy, Aquitaine, Normandy, Vermandois were held by men closely related by blood or marriage to this 'Duke of France'; his own fief was richer in men if not in natural resources, than any of these. Above all, the abbots of the great abbeys were devoted to his house. And so Hugh was unanimously elected; not by the partisans of feudal anarchy who might hope to find in him a weak king, but by the wise men who hoped to find in him a strong one; and yet not by the partisans of French nationality as against 'unity of empire,' for hardly anyone as yet recognised a distinct French nation. Nay, Hugh, though his elevation was destined to put an

end to the sort of protectorate which the Ottos had exercised over the last three French sovereigns, had the support not only of the best Frenchmen, but of all Germans who were loyal to Otto and the Empire; Charles, who at once raised the Caroling flag at Laon, had the support only of those Germans who were disloyal and of feudal anarchy itself. And it was to the old royalty of Charlemagne with all its traditions and sanctity that Hugh's supporters raised, or believed that they raised him. The voice of the common people spoke in the same sense; for a real king could be their only help against the anarchic tendencies of feudalism. What feudalism, as represented by such French fief-holders as were not Hugh's friends, thought of this new royalty we have little means of knowing, but we can fairly guess that it would soon try to treat the Capetians as it had treated the Carolings.

Hugh was, as I have said, a cold, wily, thankless creature.[1] In 989 Auberon died, and Hugh, with as much ingratitude as folly, gave the see of Rheims, not to Gerbert who was the obvious candidate, but to a young bastard Caroling called Arnulf, who of course at once betrayed the city of Rheims to his cousin Charles. Gerbert for a moment was induced to go over to the same side but in a few months repented and made a frank confession of his folly. Hugh had the luck to catch Charles and shut him up till his death. But to get rid of Arnulf, a consecrated archbishop, was a more difficult matter, and the struggle over his body must now introduce us to a new phase of ecclesiastical politics.

The whole papal position of Nicholas I. was here at stake; the whole doctrine of the False Decretals was impugned. *Could* a bishop be deposed by anyone but the pope? Gerbert maintained that he could, that the

[1] He was also *rex illiteratus*, he could not speak Latin. Richer (iii., 85) tells a good story to illustrate this, of an interview which Hugh once had had with the accomplished Otto II. Otto used a bishop to interpret his Latin to the duke (as Hugh then was), so I suppose that Otto could not speak the *Lingua Romana Rustica.*

doctrines of the False Decretals (though he never mentioned their name) were moonshine, and maintained it in language that even Hincmar had never dared to use. He was not afraid to write: 'If they shall say to you, lo here is Christ or lo he is there, believe them not. They say he is at Rome because they justify what you' [French bishops] 'have condemned and condemn what you have justified.' A synod was held in the church of Saint-Basol near Rheims, and Gerbert just managed to get a majority on his side. Arnulf was deposed and Gerbert elected to the great see. But Gerbert's enemies so far prevailed that he had to make, which was quite unusual, an explicit profession of his faith, renouncing certain heresies.[1] This may have been in consequence of his mathematical learning. At this and subsequent synods even stronger language against the papal claims was used by the Bishop of Orleans (another Arnulf by name): the popes, he said, have become tyrants, often of shocking lives, are in fact as good as Antichrist. The Saxon monk, Brother Martin, was going to use very much the same expressions five hundred and twenty-nine years later. At Chelles, in the same year, another synod confirmed the acts of that of Saint-Basol, and declared null and void anything that any pope should say 'against the decrees of the Fathers.'[2] It is idle to speculate on what might have happened if this spirit in the French Church had triumphed and spread to other lands, and if the papacy had remained in its degraded condition for another century. Perhaps there would have been, as in the Eastern Church, three or four great patriarchates independent of Rome, say at Canterbury, Rheims, Mainz, and Ravenna, with gradually diverging liturgies, canons, or even doctrines.

Alas for France and for Europe! this spirited protest

[1] We have heard nothing of 'heresy' in the West for many years. The doctrines that Gerbert renounced were not unlike those of the later Albigensians (*a*) that the devil was created bad; (*b*) that marriage and the eating of flesh are unlawful; (*c*) that the Old Testament is not the Word of God.

[2] '*Contra patrum decreta*'; *patres* may mean either the early Fathers of the Church or the members of the Synod of Saint-Basol.

of the Gallican Church was utterly contrary to the mind of the age. Gerbert was five hundred, perhaps twice five hundred years ahead of his time. The French bishops of the tenth century, though many of them, like Arnulf of Orleans, were good men, had none so clean a record that they could afford to throw stones at the popes; there had been too many politicians, rebels, simoniacs, worldly land-and-wealth-grabbers among them. Count William of Auvergne, a very powerful man, almost a king in Aquitaine in the reign of Charles the Simple, had been so much struck with this fact, and so ignorant of, or so indifferent to the far worse record of his contemporary popes, that he had spent his wealth in the foundation and endowment of the great monastery of Cluny, to be a protest against the French bishops and all their works. Cluny lies on the lower slopes of the northern Cevennes on the road from Boulogne to Lyons, and so on the direct road between the North and Italy. Its abbots were to be independent of bishop and king alike, and under the direct protection of the pope. And, whereas each Benedictine Abbey had hitherto been autonomous, all the daughter houses of Cluny were to be dependent on the Abbot of Cluny and to be nominated by him. A lofty ideal of asceticism was at the root of the foundation; the Cluniacs were to be, and many really were, saints upon earth. Every movement which, like Benedictine monasticism, has celibacy and a high standard of holiness for its bases, needs revival from outside from time to time; the Cluniac was the first of these revivals, to be followed a century later by the Cistercian.

Cluny had now been founded more than eighty years, and its success had been very largely due to its second abbot Odo, whom we have already met at the side of Alberic of Rome, trying to reform the Italian monasteries. The nearer men were to the seat of the papacy, the less they approved of the Cluniac constitution, and Central and Southern Italy had little to say to the new movement. In some places its success was startling; France and Burgundy were its best seed-grounds, and the colonisation of

the slopes of the Jura was largely the work of Cluniac monks. At the end of the tenth century there were in France and Burgundy thirty-seven daughter monasteries, all looking to the Abbot of Cluny, and through him to the pope—a sort of foreign garrison in constant rebellion against the French bishops. In Lorraine, however, there was only one such foundation, in Germany none. In England, in spite of the zeal of St Dunstan and St Oswald, there was before the Norman conquest little enthusiasm for Cluny; after that, its success and that of its offspring the Cistercian movement was rapid. And, where it spread, it got at once the ear of the common people; the new King Hugh of France, whose strength lay at Paris, might be anti-Cluniac, but his city of Paris was Cluniac to its paving-stones. It mattered nothing to the popular opinion that Gerbert and Arnulf of Orleans were good men, or that Arnulf, late of Rheims, was a bad one; he had been deposed without sanction of the god upon earth who ruled at Rome, and so he must be an injured innocent. Gerbert tried hard to stand firm, but he was almost boycotted at Rheims and was excommunicated by John XV. in 994. Even his old friends of the Imperial family, including Adelaide, turned a cold shoulder to him. At a Council at Mouzon in 995 his life was in danger, his policy was reversed, and the Cluniacs got the upper hand. In this condition of things Gerbert was saved by a sudden and unexpected invitation from the young emperor to come to his court at Magdeburg and teach him Greek and mathematics.

'Come,' wrote Otto, 'and exorcise my Saxon rusticity and stimulate my Greek subtlety.' At the end of the letter the poor boy even broke into poetry and apologised for its badness by saying that he had 'never learned to make verses'; he also begged for an arithmetic book, and said that he should consult his new tutor on politics as well as on learned subjects. So to Madgeburg in 996 Gerbert went, well pleased no doubt to be out of Rheims, to which Arnulf, who had been imprisoned and let out, returned. Hugh Capet had just died, 'killed by the

Jews,' says Richer, probably meaning his doctors.[1] His son, who then became King as Robert II., had for a while been Gerbert's pupil at Rheims; but he did not conciliate men's opinion by insisting on marrying his own third cousin. Even Gerbert disapproved of this, and the next pope disapproved of it still more; Robert at last earned the title of the Pious by obeying the pope and sending his beloved queen away. Gerbert still further lost his own claim to be considered pious by setting up at Merseburg a sun-dial and a telescope through which he looked at the stars; manifestly he was in league with the powers of darkness.

Meanwhile in 996 Otto, aged sixteen, had set out for Rome, full of burning zeal to put an end to the repeated scandals of the papacy, and to revive in his own person all the glories of all the Cæsars. He was well received at Pavia and crowned King of Italy in the spring, but Pope John died before he reached Rome. Crescentius made no resistance to Otto's entry to the capital, and probably could have made none; he also acquiesced in the election of Otto's own cousin Bruno as Pope Gregory V., the first non-Roman pontiff (with the exception of two nonentities) for two hundred and fifty years. Gregory was a man of learning and high character but ridiculously young. Think of an emperor of sixteen and a pope of twenty-three setting out to reform the Church of Western Christendom! Bruno crowned Otto at St Peter's in May 996. Some of the prudent German councillors suggested that it would be a good precaution to put Crescentius out of the way, and a sentence of banishment was passed upon him; but Otto remitted it and made his pope-cousin remit also. He then went back to Germany, and Crescentius rebelled at once, drove out Pope Gregory, and got hold of an unfortunate and hitherto respectable person called Philagathus, who had once been a tutor of Otto's and was now on his way back from Constantinople; he had gone thither to ask for a Greek bride for the emperor. Crescentius, who

[1] Hincmar had asserted the same thing concerning Charles the Bald.

was very possibly intriguing with the Greeks on his own account, made this man pope as John XVI.

At the end of the year 997 Otto, with Gerbert at his side, returned to Italy and Rome, leaving his Aunt Matilda as regent in the north. He was accompanied by an imposing array of princes, including the new Duke of Bavaria (afterwards Henry II.), the Margrave of Carinthia, and his grandmother Adelaide. He restored Gregory V. at once to Rome, and his soldiers caught and mutilated the unfortunate John XVI. in a horrible manner. Crescentius was hanged on the battlements of St Angelo. Later tradition ascribed Otto's subsequent wanderings and asceticisms to remorse for the 'murder' of this rebel, but there is no need for us to accept such a story; Crescentius had certainly earned no mercy, and the emperor was a born wanderer and mystic. The rescue of the papacy from the factious Roman nobles was thoroughly applauded by reasonable people everywhere except in Rome; but no one, least of all Pope Gregory, approved of the elevation of Gerbert to the see of Ravenna; that was Otto's own personal deed of daring. Still less did anyone approve, when on Gregory's death (probably by poison) in the next year (999), Gerbert, without any form of election but by the mere will of Otto, became pope as Sylvester II.

What would be the new pope's attitude towards all the things he had condemned when he was at Rheims? The shortness of his reign hardly allows us to give an answer. The few things that he did look as if he meant to hold out a hand of reconciliation to the Cluniac party. The voice in which he spoke was as lofty as that of Nicholas or of either Gregory, the First or Seventh. In authoritative and scolding language he confirmed his old rival Arnulf in the see of Rheims, of which the latter was not yet in canonical possession. He had already in 998 insisted that Robert of France should give up his wife. He set himself with all his might to root out simony and unchastity among the clergy, and the young emperor was heartily with him. The mere name that

Gerbert took, that of the pope who, according to tradition, had baptised the first Christian emperor, implied that he and Otto were to be the new Sylvester and the new Constantine. The same man who at Rheims had been utterly sceptical as to the donation of the temporal sovereignty of Italy by Constantine to Sylvester I., received at Rome as Sylvester II. with open hands a donation of the Pentapolis from Otto. There is some evidence that the great German bishops looked with a good deal of anxiety on this alliance of pope and emperor, and that a sort of clerical and national opposition, headed by the Archbishop of Mainz, was visible before Otto's death.

Had their joint lives been prolonged who can say that the harmony between this strange pair of friends would have endured? Otto, an antiquarian idealist, intended to make Rome once more the political capital of the West and to fix his main residence there. He built and often inhabited a palace on the Aventine; he formed, after the model of Constantine, a small body-guard of troops of the palace. He created officials, some, such as prefects, on the old Roman model, some with Byzantine names, dresses, and duties. He struggled with hopeless bravery against the wilderness of personal and tribal law and custom, in favour of Roman law. All this Imperialism (or Cæsarism if you like to use so strong a word) would probably have clashed with Sylvester's newly assumed papalism; Otto's 'prefect' would have left no room for an independent pope. And, all the while, without Otto's German troops that pope was not safe in Rome for an hour, while, a few miles away, little fortresses like Palastrina, Frascati, and Tivoli bristled with armed partisans of some fierce brigand calling himself a Roman noble, whose father had perhaps learned war-craft under Alberic. Further south, Capua, Salerno, Naples, and Gaeta were enjoying a civil war of the first class. In Germany a wild feudality was straining at the leash, and when Otto took his best friends with him to Italy he removed the only persons

who were capable of putting down an outbreak, if there should be one, in the north; yet no Italian would lend the slightest hand to keep order in Italy. Meanwhile the emperor varied his imitation of Byzantine ceremonial by running up and down Italy, Germany, and Lorraine, either, like Hadrian before him, to see marvels, or to confer with holy hermits, St Nilus at Gaeta, St Romuald[1] at Ravenna, or to pray at the tomb of the martyr St Adalbert, late Bishop of the new see of Prague in Bohemia. He listened to such men and attributed to them the gift of prophecy.

North Italy, it is true, was fairly quiet, and had been so ever since the days of Otto I.'s assumption of the Imperial crown. But Adelaide, who had ruled it for her son and grandson, and Aunt Matilda, who had from 997 (if not from 994) ruled Germany for the latter, died in the year of Sylvester's election; and Otto, when he next went to Germany had to leave the regency of Italy to his friend Hugh, Margrave of Tuscany. He returned to Rome in the year 1000, with the intention of dealing with the southern imbroglio, but had instead to deal with a rebellion of Tivoli against the capital of the world! Because, in his mercy, he refused to destroy Tivoli and to massacre its inhabitants, 'his Romans' rose against him, and besieged him in his own palace on the Aventine, from which, during a lull in the riot, he escaped with difficulty. In fact, while Otto was dreaming of a World-Empire, the Romans were dreaming of a city-state with a Count of Tusculum (Frascati), probably a descendant of Alberic's, at its head. When Otto left Rome, he had,

[1] St Romuald of Ravenna, or Camaldoli, was one of the pioneers of a great movement towards the hermit life which became popular at this time. He once flogged his own aged father till he consented to go back into a monastery from which he had fled. It is also illustrative of the time that, when Romuald proposed to fly from a certain neighbourhood where he had become too popular, his neighbours proposed, and actually attempted to kill him; he was very valuable to them living on the spot, and his dead body would be perhaps almost more valuable; but if he went away alive he would be of no use to his late neighbours at all.

of course, to take Sylvester with him to Ravenna. Thence, he went in disguise to Venice, to try and borrow from his friend, the doge, a fleet to be used in his southern venture. But Venice refused to support its doge; it knew nothing of Western emperors, and such a fleet might too easily be used against its very good commercial clients, the Saracens of Sicily; such a use of it would be agreeable to no Venetian mind. Then Otto marched southwards, besieged and took Benevento, but was not strong enough to attempt the recapture of Rome. A few years before he had told Pope Gregory that the 'qualities of the Italian air agreed ill with the qualities of his body,' and he was probably ill in body as well as mind when he took post, waiting for reinforcements, at Paterno on the slopes of Soracte. He was waiting also for his Greek bride who was on her way from Constantinople. He never lived to see her, but died of fever and a broken heart, a boy of twenty-two, at the beginning of the year 1002,

> In amplitude of dreams a god,
> A slave in dearth of power.

Pope Sylvester followed him to the grave sixteen months later.

Events of real importance to Germany and to Christendom had meanwhile been happening on the North-eastern frontier, concerning which two opinions have been held and probably will continue to be held. Some will say, and, in view of later, and even of modern history, I should be loth to contradict them, that, as the Slav has never shown any capacity for civilisation, the proper method to apply to him was that of Henry the Fowler and Otto the Great, to push him steadily back eastwards and to colonise his territory with sturdy Teutons, to leave him, if at all, only in a completely inferior position with no separate political existence. Those who think otherwise ought to praise young Otto III. very highly, for it was he who really admitted Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary into the comity of

European nations. There had been a set-back of German conquests on the east from the later days of Otto II., in fact from the time when that brave fellow made his Italian venture, and no one really continued his earlier work of pushing Teutonic colonisation eastwards until the twelfth century.

The Bohemia of those days reached far into Southern Poland, and, under Boleslav 'the pious,' had somewhat suddenly accepted Christianity. Boleslav himself founded more than twenty churches, and set up a bishop at Prague as a suffragan of Mainz. Another bishop had been set up further north at Posen in Poland as a suffragan of Magdeburg; so far all was well. Prague was a great missionary centre, and its first Bishop Adalbert had met his death preaching to the heathen Prussians and Letts in the region of the Eastern Baltic. Boleslav Chrobry, Duke of Poland, a recent convert, freed all Southern Poland from Bohemia, and made his capital at Cracow in 999. Then, knowing that young Otto cherished a romantic admiration for the memory of Bishop Adalbert, he bought that martyr's bones, or what were asserted to be his bones, from the Prussians who had killed him and buried them at Gnesen. Otto made a pilgrimage to Adalbert's tomb in that dismal region, and horrified the whole German Church, and especially his own Saxon people of Magdeburg, not only by allowing Boleslav to erect Gnesen into an archbishopric independent of the German Church, but also by treating the wily Slav duke as an independent sovereign; and this was not so well.

During these years, too, Hungary was beginning to be Christianised, chiefly by missionaries sent by a Bishop of Passau, who bore the very appropriate name of Pilgrim, though he did not scruple to forge papal bulls in favour of his own see and to the prejudice of the Archbishop of Salzburg, the prelate who had hitherto profited most by the extension of German Christianity to the south-east. These great German archbishops undoubtedly objected to the diminution of their temporal, as well as their spiritual influence by such changes. The new dynastic power of

the Babenbergs of Austria spent the last quarter of the tenth century in a long frontier war with Hungary, which only came to an end when the Hungarian chief Waik, in the year 1000, was baptised by the name of Stephen, married Gisela, daughter of Henry the Quarrelsome of Bavaria, and took the title of king. Otto and Sylvester enthusiastically confirmed to Stephen the possession of both wife and crown, and Sylvester erected the see of Gran into an independent metropolitanate for Hungary; no doubt, from the papal point of view, it was a great thing to spread Latin Christianity into regions like Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia, which might otherwise have fallen into line with the Greek Church. That Church had just accomplished the first step in the evangelisation of still more barbarous Russia, whose ruler, in return for the hand of a Greek princess, had recently been baptised by the name of Vladimir and founded an archbishopric at Kieff.

Yet, if by these changes the Latin Church was winning conquests in these regions more rapidly than the Greek, Teutonic influence was for the time actually in retreat. Hungary did, indeed, after many years, develop a civilisation and a power of her own, and earned her place among European nations. But the countries ruled by Slavonic princes never did so, or did so only in so much as they were Teutonised or conquered by Teutons in later centuries.

It would be idle to disguise how precarious was the hold which these three sovereigns of high gifts and noble aims, Otto I., II., and III., really had upon any country outside their native Saxony. As regards his Imperial power in Italy the first of them had probably no illusions; he must have known that it was the rule of the sword and nothing else; a union of two Italian crowns with his own German crown, rather than a World-Empire. The subjection of the popes, whom Otto the Great probably believed himself to have made into the first spiritual vassals of the crown, could only be maintained by force, and that force could only be supplied from Germany.

And the experiences of the three Ottos in their own country must have kept their eyes wide open to the precarious nature of this resource. Only on their family alliances and on their ecclesiastics could they ever rely, and not always on these. At one time or another between 936 and 1002 all the five duchies of Germany had been in the hands of the crown, or had been given by the kings to members of the Saxon House. This was really in accordance with the theory that the duchies were offices rather than inheritances. But historically that theory was untrue; the duchies had really originated in a feudal return to tribal organisation, and the dukes, however much they might be *put in* as officials, were seldom successful unless they married into the families of the old tribal chiefs. Thus the duchies never wholly shook off, and after a time wholly resumed their old tribal and hereditary character. The marks with their margraves, being of new creation, were perhaps more obviously intended to be official, but they too were going the way of feudality and inheritance. As for the lesser division, that of *gau*, with a count at its head, we hear almost nothing of it in the tenth century. On the other hand, alodial holding did survive in Germany and especially in the north, right down to the end of the Middle Ages, both among the lesser gentry or 'knights,' and among considerable classes of peasant freeholders. But the emperors, even the Saxon emperors, could make no use of these men because they had no institutions through which they could command their services.

The most we can say is that feudalism in Germany was a much later and more incomplete growth than it was in France. It came in later, and so it went out later. And, if feudalism as a system was incomplete, even more incomplete was the royalist and centralising machinery of the Carolings. On the Rhine and in the country west of that river this machinery had been of natural growth; but into Central and Eastern Germany it was an importation of the Caroling age, and so it never obtained so much hold on the Eastern as it did on the Western half of the

Empire; while those fragments of it that did obtain a hold died out a little later than they died in France, because they had a less vigorous feudalism to combat, a more conservative people to uphold their shadows after their substance had passed away. One institution and one only of a centralising tendency is usually ascribed to the Ottos, that of 'Counts Palatine'—Counts of the Royal Palace, whom we may suppose to have been analogous to the Carolingian *Missi*. There are traces of such an official in each duchy; and one of them, the 'Count Palatine of the Rhine' survived to give his name to a territory, 'the Palatinate,' which very soon became hereditary and very early ceased to be official. There is another and even more important difference between the several developments of feudalism in France and in Germany. Among the East Franks and the German tribes dependent on them the partibility of inheritances between all sons survived much longer than it did west of the Rhine. There can be no true feudalism without primogenitary succession, for feudalism implies military command of the fighting force on the landowners' estate, *propter jus gladii quod dividi non potest*.[1] Thus, in Germany, it was a surprise when Henry the Fowler left his whole duchy to one son; and it was a surprise five centuries later when the Hohenzollern Electors of Brandenburg followed the same plan. Wittikind (ii., 10) gives an account of a legal dispute in the reign of Otto I. on the question if the sons of a deceased son had a right to their father's share in their grandfather's property at that grandfather's death. The matter was tried, in what their English cousins would have called an open 'moot,' by the Saxon freeholders at Steele on the Ruhr, and tried by the simplest of all methods, judicial combat; not by the gentlemen concerned but by hired 'champions' (*gladiatores*),[2]

[1] The curious mediæval German custom of coinvestiture (*Belehnung zur gesammten Hand*), by which several persons at once were invested with the same fief, shows how imperfectly true feudal principles were understood. See Schröder, *Deutsche Rechtsgeshichte*, 413-4.

[2] The case was one of *Urtheilschelte*, in which the finding of

and the very ancient (or very modern) practice won; it was decided that the sons of A took A's share, which was equal with the shares of their uncles B, C, and D. But there was no law, no ruling on the subject, for there was never an Imperial law court strong enough to make any such ruling.[1] So it became a matter simply of 'family custom' whether the Count of Schnippy-Schnappenhausen should leave his lands to his eldest son or some other of his sons, or should divide them among all his sons. In the last case all would equally be counts, and this will explain the existence of a Count of Schnippy-Schnappenhausen - Sonderburg, another of Schnippy - Schnappenhausen-Glücksburg, and a third of Schnippy-Schnappenhausen-Unglücksburg, and so on. That is what used to be called, in the infancy of the present writer, German *Particularismus*, and was the curse of Germany until the creation of the modern Empire in 1871.

All through the ninth and tenth centuries on both sides of the Rhine the process of decentralisation had been going on, but with far greater celerity on the left bank. Whether the nominal king ruled at Laon or Paris, at Aachen, Ingelheim, or Regensburg, whether he ruled West Franks or East Franks, Aquitanians, Bretons, Frisians, Bavarians, or Swabians, his real hold over those persons was slipping from him. In the reign of Charlemagne only the extremities, Brittany, Aquitaine, Bavaria, were really kicking; at the death of Hugh Capet and Otto III. everyone was kicking. Royalty was all but powerless to kick the kickers back, still more powerless to kick them out. Let us turn our eyes to the West, and we shall see the process, if not the reasons, of this steady failure of power.

Charlemagne had governed, as Dagobert or Clovis had

the court was challenged, and the court had to fight the challengers by its champions.

[1] In the next century the Diet, gradually becoming a more powerful body, would occasionally give sentence like a law court, and its sentences might be appealed to by subsequent litigants; but it failed of creating a series of precedents to which all could appeal.

governed, each *civitas*[1] in Gaul, each *gau* in Germany, by means of a count, whom we long ago realised to be only a slightly transformed official of the later Roman Empire. This count, the greatest administrative, judicial, and military officer in his district, was paid in lands, whose rents he took while he held his office; Charlemagne had nothing else with which to pay his officers, for you remember that the sixth-century bishops had made even the most wicked Merovingian kings 'repent' of their taxes. After Charlemagne's death, such a count gradually made both his office and the lands, whose rents were its wages, hereditary; he added to them all the royal rights (*e.g.* tolls on river-fords or bridges or on markets, and profits of justice) on which he could lay hands, and kept all the results thereof for himself and his sons. Very likely, in the civil wars of 829-43, he made war on a neighbouring count, beat him and added his county, with all its aforesaid rents and profits, to his own. Perhaps he reached the same felicity without even a private war, by merely marrying the daughter of a deceased neighbour-count who happened to have no sons. At what date he abandoned the wasteful practice of squandering this new family strength by dividing his lands among his several sons it is difficult to say; certainly not even in France was primogeniture the invariable rule before the year 1000. But it was *becoming* the rule, and, when it had become the rule, the eldest descendant of such a count stepped upon the scene as a full-blown feudal noble and obeyed Hugh Capet or Robert the Pious as much as, and when, he pleased.

The actual number of counts was not great, and that of dukes or margraves far smaller; but the number of smaller officials, viscounts, vicars, hundred-men, stewards, and the like, was very great, and the wages of all were simply paid in land, either by the crown, or by the counts or dukes who nominated them and under whom they served. As each of them played on a lesser stage the same game that the counts were playing on a greater,

[1] The word in use for *civitas* by the eighth century was *comitatus*.

their mere number was just so much food-stuff for feudalism. All the bishops and great abbots and abbesses, (who were, indeed, among the earliest of the *Seigneurs* to get immunity from taxes and royal justice) did, upon their lands, precisely what the lay *Seigneurs* were doing on theirs. A bishop would occasionally get the grant of a county to administer; very well, he would annex the lands, rents, and profits of that county to his see, and the next king would not be able to take them away from the next bishop.[1] Sometimes, though rarely, *vicibus versatis*, a layman would get the grant of an abbey, would actually call himself abbot, would appoint a monk to perform the abbot's spiritual functions, or even let the monks elect one, while he would keep the rents of the abbey lands for himself.

An intelligent king like Charles the Bald must have had a shrewd idea of what was going on; but he was powerless to prevent it because he had lost control of the armed forces. And he had lost this control because the armed freemen, west of Rhine at least, had disappeared. And these had disappeared because it paid them better to surrender their lands to the nearest great man, and receive those lands back as his vassals. Protection—against Norman, Saracen, Hungarian,—or against some other great Frank—was their main need, and this protection could be got more surely from the nearest great man than from the distant king. Alodial ownership of land thus died out altogether in the western half of the Empire; everyone came to hold his acres as a 'benefice' or 'fief' from someone else. Such holding would not at first be hereditary, but it inevitably tended to become so. It must always have begun in some sort of a contract, express or implied:—'I, Jacques Bonhomme, commend my person to you, Count Hugh, and to you I surrender my

[1] Instances of this are the counties of Tournai, Beauvais, Noyon, Laon, Rheims, Châlons, Langres annexed to their respective bishoprics. On the other hand, if the bishops absorbed counties, they occasionally got plundered themselves; the fortunes of the great House of Coucy originated in robbery from the see of Rheims.

land. I shall continue to till the land and pay you a rent for it, either in money, or in produce, or in labour, or in fighting for you. You in return will, next time the pirates come, allow me, my wife, children, and cows to take refuge in the wooden castle which I hear you are going to build; I will help you to build it.' It may very well happen that it is not Jacques who is the first to make overtures for such a contract; it may be Count Hugh who, being short of men to garrison his new castle, actually advertises for stout freemen to become his vassals. Brigandage, quite apart from barbarian invasions, was rife all over the Empire. Count Hugh *ought* to hang all the brigands he catches; but, if he is short of men . . .? A pardoned brigand may make a good vassal, and may be endowed with lands. Did not Henry the Fowler garrison Merseburg with such men?

This contract between Jacques and Hugh will at first terminate with the life of either. But, if Jacques leave a son of full age, what more natural than that such son should continue to serve the son of Hugh? Even Charlemagne had recognised that men *may* seek protection from their powerful neighbours, may 'choose their own lord' (*seniorem, seigneur*). His grandson Charles the Bald will say they *must* choose a lord, that they *must* follow to battle the lord whom they have chosen; which is as good as saying that the crown can no longer protect them. Now a strong king and a rich king, even if he is losing all his *sovereign* power, ought to be able to find many men willing to commend themselves to him as *seigneur;* even if he is losing his grip on Hugh as the official and count, he ought to be able to buy fidelity back from Hugh as a vassal. He will then be more of a *seigneur* than a sovereign, but even that will be better than nothing.

That was just what all the later Carolings tried to do. They made large grants of benefices out of their large crown estates in order to buy the fidelity of their *fideles.* That was a process which soon exhausted itself. When all the crown lands have been given away (and the last

Carolings were reduced to the city of Laon as almost their sole possession) the kings will have to give away their 'regalian' rights, the profits of striking coins, the fines in the law courts, the right to build and garrison castles. And unfortunately they will get no fidelity in return for these gifts. It is obvious that an oath of fealty from Count Hugh to King Charles sat far more lightly on Count Hugh, than an oath of fealty from Jacques to Hugh sat on Jacques. Not that Jacques was in any way more averse to perjury than Hugh, but simply because Hugh would be able to lay hands on Jacques, if he violated his oath, and the king would not be able, in similar circumstances, to lay hands on Hugh.

There was nothing, after all, new in this process; it had been going on, as we saw in an earlier chapter, under the First Race of kings; something not unlike it had been going on in the latest days of the old Roman Empire. What was new in the ninth and tenth centuries was that nothing else was going on. The feudalising process, which Charlemagne had at least checked, now worked independently of all checks, exclusively of all other processes. If the king was acting thus towards his *fideles*, each count was also 'gratifying' a long list of stewards, hundred-men, vicars, viscounts, abbots, perhaps even bishops, by similar grants of fragments of his comital power;[1] the feudal ladder was growing rung after rung.

The oath of allegiance to the crown, which Charlemagne had imposed on all persons over twelve years, though still legally binding, gave way in practice to the oath of fealty to the *seigneur* to whom a man commended himself. True, such *seigneurs* ought to take the same

[1] For instance the great House of Anjou began with a certain Fulk, whom Robert the Strong made Viscount of Angers; it improved the shining hours of the ninth century by perpetual quarrels with another house of similar origin, that of Blois, concerning that part of the later province of Touraine which lay between their respective territories. The rock of Angers was a frontier station of great importance between Normans, Bretons, and Aquitanians; and the loyalty of the counts of Anjou to the early Capetian kings was a great factor in French history.

oath to each new king. But some will hesitate to take it; it will become a matter of contract. Count Hugh will say to King Charles: 'What will you give me if I do take it? Will you give my father's county and city of Paris?' When Count Hugh subsequently throws off his allegiance to King Charles, he ought to say, with Alceste in Molière's *Misanthrope*, 'Reprenez votre Paris.' But he will not say so; he will stick to it and to everything else he can grab. Duke Henry said much the same to the Empress-Regent Theophano in 984—'If I "come in" at the end of this rebellion of mine, will you give me back the Duchy of Bavaria?' How much more must this have been the case in the debateable land of Lorraine! A man like Gilbert can say to Henry the Fowler and to Charles the Simple at one and the same time: 'I can transfer to you the whole of Lorraine if you will make me duke of it; I can make it French or German at my will, for I hold in it the largest number of countships, castles, vassals, manors, royal rights. Some of these I have simply grabbed, but I can show a title, from the predecessors of one or the other of you, for a good many of them.' In fact in Lorraine any duke or count who is punished by one of the kings can easily transfer his allegiance to the other. There are actual instances—that of the deposition of Charles the Simple is a very clear one—in which the great men publicly renounce their fidelity, give it back to the king as a thing for which neither party has further use.

Thus each succession to the crown becomes the occasion of a long series of new bargains, *Wahl-capitulationen* (election-compacts). Not that either crown, of the East or West Franks, is supposed to be elective. Even Arnulf, though a bastard, succeeds because he is a Caroling. Conrad is the first clear instance of election in Germany (912), Odo in France (888). As long as Caroling blood survives there is always a party for it on either bank of the Rhine. Yet never is the succession of the best heir a matter of course; the eldest son of a crowned and anointed Caroling, even if he has been crowned and anointed in his father's lifetime, needs recognition, or

acceptance of some kind, by the *Conventus Generalis*, *Placitum*, or Diet of the great vassals. And such a recognition is as good an opportunity of wringing privileges from him as an open election would be. A king in such a position, having lost all taxes, all free landowning soldiers, all control of the law courts, all power of legislating (there are no more capitularies after 885), will have but one object, to increase the number of his personal following, to become richer in vassals than any of his counts, bishops, or dukes. One might almost say that the sons of Louis the Pious fought their dismal civil wars, not so much to get lands or regalian rights, as to get personal followings of vassals. One might almost say that directly a king got any land he stripped himself of it, by giving it away as a benefice or fief, in order to buy more vassals; and then of course all the king's vassals on that bit of land become vassals of the new holder.

Law, however, we know, follows custom at a very halting pace. One definite legal enactment, and one only, almost the last melancholy fragment of Imperial legislation, registers and ratifies this sorry state of things. It is the capitulary of Kiersy or Quiercy-sur-Oise issued by Charles the Bald[1] just before his last journey to Italy (877). Its gist roughly is that, when a count dies, his son is the natural person to succeed to his office and to all the lands and regalian rights attached to that office. This edict or capitulary does not say 'The son of such a count shall so succeed, and such lands, office, and *regalia* shall henceforth be hereditary in his family'; but it assumes that this is the normal state of things, which the regent is not to violate in the king's absence. It orders the counts to observe a similar scheme of hereditary succession in nominating to the minor offices to which they have always nominated. It is, then, a simple legalisation of the feudal system of land-tenure and government, legalisation of a machinery with a constantly growing number of intercogging wheels, which can go on working in almost entire independence of any central force.

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 307.

Why then did kingship as a centre, or pretence of a centre, continue to exist? Partly because the process of the change was so little understood, that it would never occur to anyone to 'abolish' the crown; very likely only a few people realised its steady loss of prestige. Partly also because the feudal machinery needed some sort of key to wind it up occasionally, some sort of fountain of these gifts of lands and privileges. It was useful to keep a person from whom you could take away not only that which he had, but that which he seemed to have. But most of all the crown survived because of the influence of the Church and the Bible. There was no divine right of any particular king, but kingship was believed to be of divine institution and origin. The Carolings had been hallowed to be kings with great solemnity, and, by the time their race was worn out, the sanctity of kingship was such a well-established idea that the Saxons on the east of the Rhine and the race of Robert the Strong on the west of it had no difficulty in annexing that sanctity to themselves. The Church had indeed special need of the crown to be a champion, if only in name, of its vast wealth against the lay nobles; and even these to some extent could make a corresponding use of the crown against the greed of the great churchmen.

Finally let us be slow to condemn feudalism. When it is tried at the bar of history its results appear to have been good. The change from a weak and incapable central power to a set of strong local powers was all for good. The new feudal lords did what no king since Charlemagne had done; they drove back the pirates and hanged all the brigands whom they did not want as soldiers. It also probably led to greater comfort, or rather to less abject misery all round; to possess strong fighting men rather than treasure was now the object of all who would rise or even hold their own; and, if men are to be strong and to fight heartily for their lord, he in turn must be a good lord to them. He must see that his tenants are not skin and bone or they will be of no

use to him. The strongest of such tenants would usually be horse-soldiers. The pirate invasions had taught everyone that a few heavily armed cavalrymen were worth any number of half-armed infantry. Before the eleventh century is half over the word *miles* has begun to mean exclusively a 'knight' on horseback.

As I close this volume my weary readers may very well ask me why I have made no attempt, in tracing the fortunes of the Children of the Roman Empire after the year 800, to include the territory which still claimed to be the Mother Empire itself, Constantinople and all the broad lands, European and Asiatic, over which the Greek emperors still ruled. My answer must be, in the first place, that I desire much to show some mercy to my readers, and desire still more to show some to myself. In the second place, I would plead that, from the deposition of Irene until the Crusades, the points of contact between the Greeks and their Western neighbours are few, and that I have not wholly omitted to refer to them in the course of the Western history. The East was becoming every day more Eastern, less European. It had no doubt still great lessons to teach the Western world, and, in the twelfth century, it began to teach them. Its military power remained unbroken, and, indeed, had a remarkable revival in the hands of the 'Macedonian' (or rather Armenian) dynasty which began with Basil I. in 867. Its old machinery went grimly and dully round, varied by an occasional palace revolution or by the deposition of a patriarch. Its missionary work among Bulgarians, Southern Slavs, and Russians also went on; in the ninth century the 'Apostles of the Slavs,' the brothers Cyril[1] and Methodius, translated the liturgy of the Eastern Church into the Slavonic speech, and omitted from the Apostles' creed the *filioque* clause.

[1] Cyril is the reputed author of the exceedingly stupid and unnecessary Russian alphabet—an excuse for which may be that he thought the Greek alphabet too good for Slays. Cyril is sometimes called 'Constantine'; probably he took the former name at his consecration as bishop.

Basil I.[1] began that fresh eastward advance of the Empire which was only checked with the appearance of the Seljukian Turks in the eleventh century; he remodelled his fleet till it became for the next two centuries the dominant power in the Mediterranean; he led his own troops across Mount Taurus, where no Greeks had been since the days of Heraclius.

In Europe the successes of the rulers of Constantinople in the ninth century were not so great; a vast Bulgarian kingdom stretched over all but the sea-coasts of the Balkan Peninsula, and, before it was overthrown by Basil II. early in the eleventh century, it had been conquered and ravaged by Russians, almost as barbarous as the Bulgars themselves. Rurik 'the Varanger' was the traditionary founder of the Russian power; probably he was a Swede, and there is no great reason to doubt that, while Danes and Norwegians raided to the south-west, their kinsmen the Swedes raided to the south-east, up the Vistula and down the rivers of the Black Sea, through what the Greek historians of those days still called 'Scythia.' The name 'Varangian' is believed to be of Arab origin and was applied by the Arabs to the peoples on the Baltic. From Novgorod-on-the-Ilmen such Varangers pushed ever southwards, and at last took Kieff on the Dnieper, and exacted tribute from the Turkish Chazars on the Volga. And far beyond that too; we hear of Russian raids deep into the Balkan Peninsula. Nine centuries before Katharine the Great, two of her barbarous predecessors (Oskold, 865, and Oleg, 907, whose names betray their Scandinavian origin) knocked, where Katharine would fain have knocked, at the gates of Constantinople, and one of them even hung his shield on them; half a century later another, with a name now

[1] Basil I. was law-giver as well as warrior; he published in Greek an abbreviation of Justinian's Codex, which remained in force to the fall of the Eastern Empire, and thereby upset the *Ecloga* of Leo the Isaurian, and restored many abuses such as serfdom, which the enlightened jurisprudence of the Iconoclasts had abolished.

completely Russified into Swatoslav, followed in Oleg's footsteps, though he did not get quite so far (970).

The Hungarians, busy as they were elsewhere, were obliged to put their noses into the same distracted region. Leo. VI., son of Basil I., employed them against the semi-Christian Bulgarians at the end of the ninth century; Leo, though he wrote a book on military matters called *Tactica*, was no fighter himself. His son Constantine VII., 'Porphyrogenitus,' was also a man of letters, and it was in his minority that his mother-regent Zoe sent help to the league of Berengar I. and John X. against the Saracens in South Italy. Readers of Byzantine history in the tenth century are often puzzled at finding that there are occasionally two or more emperors at once; during minorities a warlike general would be co-opted as 'associated Cæsar,' and would be married to a princess of the Imperial House; or two brothers would be crowned as Augusti together. Nicephorus Phocas and John Zimisces were Cæsars of the former kind, and both were excellent and valiant soldiers. Nicephorus, Liutprand's 'villainous looking fellow whom you wouldn't like to meet in the dark,' won back Crete in 961 and Cyprus in 965. John Zimisces drove Bulgars and Russians before him, and carried the frontier once more to the Danube; in the East Nicephorus recovered Cilicia and even Antioch, which was again a Christian city until the Seljukian Turks retook it on the eve of the first Crusade. The century and our period closes with a fresh and terrible war in the Balkan Peninsula, out of which Basil II. will emerge in 1018, honourable to all time as the 'Bulgar-slayer.'

WESTERN EUROPE
1000 A.D.
With few exceptions only those places mentioned in the text are named on the map.
English Miles
Bremen
Verden
Ravelberg
Brandenburg
Magdeburg
Hildesheim
Halberstadt
Quedlinburg
Utrecht
Münster
Osnabrück
Minden
Paderborn
Gandersheim
Eichstadt
Merseburg
Meissen
Lusatia
Bohemia
Prague
Wurzburg
Ratisbon
Passau
Salzburg
Austria
Vienna
Carinthia
Aquileia
Grado
Venice
Verona
Padua
Milan
Pavia
Mantua
Parma
Ravenna
Rimini
Ancona
Pesaro
Fano
Perugia
Spoleto
Orvieto
Viterbo
Terni
Rieti
Tivoli
Palestrina
Frascati
Arpino
Monte Cassino
Terracina
Capua
Benevento
Naples
Salerno
Gaeta
Civita Vecchia
Porto Romano
Ostia
C. Circe
Lake Bolsena
Lake Trasimene
Lake Constance
Zurich
Basle
St. Gall
Reichenau
Constance
Augsburg
Freisingen
Eichstadt
Speyer
Worms
Mainz
Frankfort
Fulda
Eisenach
Erfurt
Aschaffenburg
Andernach
Bonn
Cologne
Aix-la-Chapelle
Liege
Maestricht
Juliers
Treves
Metz
Verdun
Rheims
Soissons
Laon
Meaux
Paris
Chartres
Rouen
Beauvais
Amiens
Abbeville
Boulogne
Tournay
Courtray
Ghent
Bruges
Antwerp
Walcheren
Sterle
Fritzlar
Brittany
Normandy
Orleans
Sens
Troyes
Auxerre
Langres
Tours
Blois
Angers
Nantes
Poitiers
Autun
Chalons
Macon
Lyons
Vienne
Aosta
Ivrea
Susa
St. Jean de Maurienne
Bordeaux
Clermont
Aquitaine
Toulouse
Narbonne
Nismes
Arles
Marseilles
Frassinetum
Lerins I.
Gascony
Vittoria
Pampelona
Ansforra
Saragossa
Barcelona
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Septimania
Cevennes Mts.
Alps
Genoa
Corsica
Sardinia
Corsica
Sardinia

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